University of Alberta

Healing From Intimate Partner Violence
in a
Northern Canadian Aboriginal Context:
A Case Study

By

Sandra Lynn Malcolm ©

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Canada

If a way to be better there be, it lies in taking a full look at what is.

Thomas Hardy

This work is dedicated to my Tatoo and Mama,

who by their unceasing work

gave me the chance

to dream the dreams

that brought me to university

to study what was important to me.

I have been given the chance to do

what they could not even dream.

It is also dedicated to

David

Shauna and Lynn

who continually say,

"You can so do it"

Abstract

While there is growing body of knowledge about violence as pathology, there is a paucity of information about the process of healing from violence. This research recounts a northern Canadian Aboriginal family's story about their process of healing from family violence.

The ethnographic narrative case study was conducted by interviewing three generations of family and community members. Political, economic, legal, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual factors contributed to the family's ability to break the cycle of violence. The female partner recognised her role in the violence. During a resource-rich phase in the community, the male partner began first sporadic then complete alcohol abstinence; the severity and frequency of the violence was reduced. The male's recall of childhood sexual abuse helped to remove the threat of violence. The female partner healed with self-help programs, spiritual connection, and increased education. The male partner healed with political activism and Native spirituality.

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Chapter 1: Why this research?

"Why this research? Why now? Ask this of yourselves," graduate students in Human Ecology were admonished (Norah Keating, personal communication, 2003). Why is this research of importance?

Violence in northern Aboriginal communities has reached epidemic proportions. Two recent studies note somewhat different, but very high rates of spousal assault rates among Canadian Aboriginal people. Kiyoshk (2003) reported that while the overall spousal assault rate is reported at eight percent in Canada, the rate is between 40-90 percent in Canadian Aboriginal communities. In a Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics report released in June 2006, Brzozowski, Taylor-Butts, and Johnson (2006) concluded that while Aboriginal people accounted for about three per cent of the Canadian population between 1997 and 2004, 21 percent reported having experienced some form of physical or sexual violence by a spouse in the five years preceding the 2004 survey. This compared to six percent of non-Aboriginal people who experienced intimate partner violence over the same time period.

Children who grow up in that context learn the intricacies of family violence at a very young age. They learn that it is the normal way of relating to others. At the same time, however, violence is viewed as unacceptable: not part of the traditional Aboriginal culture (Health Canada, 1996). Because family violence is both normal and unacceptable, those who feel a strong attachment to the Aboriginal culture experience cognitive dissonance. They believe that they should be living one way (in harmony with themselves and Mother Earth), while they are actually living another way (in the chaotic state that accompanies intimate partner violence). Many look toward healing from perpetrating and accepting violence. Where can they go for help? Community and spiritual elders who have themselves healed are a source of help. The existing helping agencies are also a source of help. They are, however, usually underfunded and not based on the traditional culture. The people who wish to heal take programming where they can, but there are pieces missing.

Research could help to fill the missing pieces by providing information on the process of healing to both those who wish to heal and those who would help. There is, in the literature, a growing body of knowledge about violence as pathology. Research is available as to why victims stay in the violent context. Research is available on the short-term outcomes of spousal assault groups. There is a dearth of long-term research that documents the outcomes of participants from spousal assault programs. As well, there is, in the literature, a paucity of information about psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual healing from family violence.

Much research is available about Aboriginal people. Buller (2004) notes that "Aboriginal people have been researched to death by governments and academics" (p. 3). As a matter of fact, Aboriginal people have been so extensively researched that a standard joke goes, "An Aboriginal family consists of a father, a mother, two children, and an anthropologist" (Anonymous). In spite of all this research activity however, there is a scarcity of available research on healing from violence in an isolated northern Canadian Aboriginal context.

Dr. Keating also admonished us to answer, "Why now?" In my attempt to answer Dr. Keating's question, I recalled my experiences as a counsellor where I learned that violence in northern communities was a much-too common phenomenon. I recalled a talk given in an instructor's class for Saskatchewan's Driving Without Impairment Program by a constable from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) which clearly outlined both the predominance of the violence and the lack of resources to deal with it. The RCMP constable said that because of short-staffing and because cases of family violence took priority in his work, he often had to ignore obviously drunk drivers as he drove toward the scene of the domestic disputes. My experience also taught me that although psycho-educational classes could be useful in helping those enmeshed in violent relationships, more knowledge of the process of healing from the violence could be beneficial to both helpers and those who would be helped. Along with my colleagues, I knew that more information about how others in the Aboriginal community had healed would assist us in better helping others. I also knew that it would be helpful to those who wished to heal from violence to be able to model their thoughts, actions, and beliefs after those who had walked that path before them. It was vital that the stories of those who had progressed further along their healing journey began to be told and recorded in their own voice so that others could follow behind. helper

One way of helping others learn is through the process of transferability whereby readers learn about one situation in detail, find similarities in another environment or situation, and are able to transfer the results of the first situation to the other (Colorado State University, 2007). Some personal stories of healing by individual Aboriginal people were available in print (Nabigon, 2006; Wiebe and Johnson, 1998), but more would be useful. It was hoped that the detailed documentation in this thesis of one Aboriginal family's healing journey away from physical violence and into living a more serene life-style could provide transferable knowledge to others. If it were to help one individual, family, or community to lessen the pain of family violence or an individual, family, or community help another along a healing journey then the work would be both timely and expedient.

Background to the research

This project began to take root in my mind when I was working as a counsellor, providing anger management programming to men and their families. The intention of the anger management programming was to teach the male participants a healthier way of life. The socio-educational programming was based upon the tenet that unhealthy personal and interpersonal behaviour is the result of a lack of knowledge. We taught basic conflict-resolution and life skills as well as the basic concepts underlying addiction recovery from the Saskatchewan Model of Recovery Services to mostly Aboriginal men who were usually mandated to take an Anger Management course by their probation officers. We had the best intentions but our programming was not as effective as it could have been because its basic tenets were direct teaching, correction, and punishment whereas the tenets of learning for Aboriginal people were teaching through storytelling, modelling, and encouragement. An Aboriginal man, observing the programming said, "This is not our way of healing. This is not the Traditional way" (W. Cardinal, personal communication, September 20, 1995). He was right. A better approach was required. It was time to search for more information.

I read Jean Briggs' (1970) anthropological classic, *Never in anger: Portrait of an Eskimo family* and the basic tenets of the text agreed with what Mr. Cardinal had said. Brigg's documentation of the traditional Inuit way of life showed that child rearing was based upon the child's curiosity and the adult's gentle guiding. Direct teaching, correction, or punishments were not used in teaching an Inuit child the patterns of behaviour necessary to survive and flourish. But Inuit people were different from First Nations people. Perhaps their childrearing methods were also different.

People from First Nations communities confirmed that their traditional childrearing methods were similar to the Inuit. Nerburn (1999) recorded the words of Chief Luther Standing Bear, a Teton Sioux man who said, "In talking to children, the old Lakota would place a hand on the ground and explain: 'We sit in the lap of our mother. From her we and all other living things come. We shall soon pass, but the place where we now rest will last forever.' So we, too, learned to sit or lie on the ground and become conscious of life about us in its multitude of forms" (p. 15). After reading and then discussions with First Nations people followed by reflections on what I had learned, I knew that the programming hosted by our centre, although based upon our hardest work and our best intentions, was fundamentally flawed. It needed to be based on an Aboriginal model of learning, with gentle teaching and modelling, never punishment or correction.

How could I set up programming that would fit within the Aboriginal learning style? There were, in the area, traditional teaching camps being held for youth. The camps were based upon the tenet that by teaching them the traditional Aboriginal ways of hunting, fishing, and surviving on the land, the youth would learn the cultural ways. This method was in keeping with Eastman's (1999) recollections of the teaching methods by which he learned. "As a little child, it was instilled into me to be silent and reticent. This was one of the most important traits to form in the character of the Indian. As a hunter and warrior, it was considered absolutely necessary to him, and was thought to lay the foundations of patience and self-control" (p. 17). As the youth learned the cultural ways, they would become less angry and less involved in behaviours that were detrimental to them, their families, and their community.

The method of cultural camps was good for youth, but what about the men who were beating their wives? Many of these men had been raised "on the land" or "on the trap line." They knew how to hunt, fish, and survive in the bush but they continued to be violent to their spouses. We needed some way of working with them, some model of healing from the Aboriginal culture. How did people in northern Aboriginal communities achieve a non-violent way of life? Statistics and personal experience were confirming that there was a very high rate of violence in northern Aboriginal families. From personal experience I knew that the north was vastly different from the south in terms of available services, culture, and political, social, cultural, and historical ideologies precluding my looking for all my answers in the south. Someone from the north would have to provide the teaching. It followed that an outline of the healing process that was endemic to the culture and reality of northern Aboriginal life would be a helpful addition to the literature.

Why this researcher?

Research is framed and influenced by the researcher and his/her history, culture, personal values, assumptions, biases, beliefs, and experiences. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) define qualitative research as a method of inquiry conducted in a natural setting, that builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, and reports detailed views of informants (p. 2). Yin (2003) notes that bias is frequently encountered, but less frequently overcome in qualitative case study research (p. 10). Morse and Richards (2002) note that when experience brings a particular research problem to the fore, that experience will both drive the study, and be involved in it. Their solution? Disclose personal interest and experience, a purposeful but not self-indulgent risk (p. 105) known as bracketing. Bracketing frames researcher's assumptions, thereby allowing others to see the biases that may be inherent in the framing and conducting of the research, in the analyses, and the conclusions. To this end, my story is bracketed, especially those personal experiences and beliefs that have shaped the research question, my conduct throughout the research, and the lens through which the data is viewed. In short, this answers the question, "Why me?"

Beginning in my teens, I was conscious of the soul-eating destruction of family violence. As such, it was a determining factor in my career choice as addictions counsellor. My first position as an addictions counsellor found me stationed in a northern Saskatchewan community. Aboriginal men comprised the bulk of my client load; the majority were mandated for treatment by the judicial system because of co-occurring alcoholism and intimate partner violence.

I listened to the stories of the offenders as well as to the stories of their spouses and families. It was clear that most offenders were attempting to minimise their responsibility for the assaults. It also became clear that the spouses played a part in the assaults. The offenders were physically stronger and asserted themselves physically. The spouses were physically weaker but asserted themselves verbally. Overuse of alcohol and other drugs was a dynamic part of relationships. “Alcohol added fuel to my anger.” (Gabe, personal communication, April 2, 2006). Pathological gambling was often present.

I had been trained to start where the client was, and to look at addictions. The clients were concerned with their lack of freedom and their inability to remain a family. Each one told me that their goal was to get out of the system as soon as possible. To get out of the system, they had to prove to the courts that they had taken steps to learn to live a different life style. Our centre designed and delivered programming that attempted to help them learn how to live a lifestyle free of violence and of mind and mood altering substances.

Research tended to couch violence as unidirectional; the bad offender hits an undeserving spouse. In fact, violence appeared to be a lethal interaction in which both partners were gravely involved and affected, where children had to learn quickly how to protect themselves and others, and where other members of the community were impacted. As a counsellor, I continually resisted becoming a part of that interaction, and searched for ways of being able to help the clients. My husband, David told me that his training in physical science had taught him that the best way to solve a problem was to understand it fully. In the graphic terminology of my working environment, I was told that I needed to understand the problem so well that the solution to the problem would jump up and smack me upside the head. I read the material that was available to me in that northern centre and became convinced that I was working against myself. I was certain that the academic literature and universities would be able to teach me more about the problem. I was led to a program of graduate studies in Human Ecology at the University of Alberta.

I wanted to help, but had learned that in order to help effectively, I needed to use culturally appropriate methods and ideologies. A library search at the university revealed that there was a lot of literature examining the violent person, creating an ontology of violence. There was literature addressing victims of abuse especially in terms of what made them remain in violent relationships. There was literature on healing and on resilience. My search found no research on healing from intimate partner violence in a northern Canadian context. I could not readily access any literature on how a family, an Aboriginal family situated in the north of Canada with its dearth of resources could heal from intimate partner violence.

My objective was to learn more about the dynamics of family violence, and even more importantly, to learn about healing from family violence in a culturally appropriate manner. Since there was a scarcity of literature in that area, I thought that interviewing a family who had healed from family violence would help me learn what had happened to the people who stopped the family violence cycle. If I could better understand the dynamics of one such family, I could help others more effectively in my future practice. By writing in the academic literature about the phenomenon of listening, respecting, and honouring people, there was a better chance that others could be helped as well.

Research question

> What were the stories of a northern Canadian Aboriginal family who healed from intimate partner violence? What are their stories? What can be learned from their stories that might help others?

Chapter 2: Defining the words

Terms such as family, violence, healing, and north can have different meanings to different people. I can best obtain clarity when I am clear about my understandings and preferences in definitions. In this section the terms intimate partner violence, family violence, family, violence, north, and Aboriginal are defined to frame the study. However, as is the norm in qualitative research, these definitions could be modified as I came to understand the participants' perspectives and/or worldview.

What is intimate partner violence?

For the purposes of this study, intimate partner violence is a term which refers to "injurious acts perpetuated by adults" (Stordeur and Stille, 1989, p. 19) who are engaging or have engaged in a close acquaintance, association, or familiarity (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, p. 656) or a sexual relationship. In her work, Mills (2003) asserts that intimate partner violence is a product of intimacy and an expression of relationship. It is a mode of communication between lovers, friends, and family members (p. 13). Wallace (2002) defines family violence as any act or omission by persons who are cohabitating that results in serious injury to other members of the family (p. 2).

Johnson and Ferraro (2000) cite four different types of intimate partner violence, each of which can result in consequences of varying severity including death: common couple violence, intimate terrorism, violent resistance, and mutual violent control. Common couple violence arises in the context of a specific argument where there is a violent lashing out. Intimate terrorism presents relationship dynamics noted in the widely-known O.J. Simpson case. It is motivated by a general need to control, and is likely to escalate over time. Violent resistance, the preferred term for a violent form of self-defence, is one indicator that the defender will soon likely leave the relationship. Mutual violent control, an uncommon type of violence, is characterised by two terrorists fighting for control.

What is family violence?

Violence always affects others, especially those closest to the disputing people, i.e., families. Thus, the term intimate partner violence is used interchangeably with the term family violence: the exertion of physical force with the intent to injure or abuse by one family member on another family member.

Family violence is a term that is common to most people. But what meaning is being bestowed on the term, family, in this thesis? What about violence? To best define family violence, the word family will be defined first, followed by violence, then family violence.

What is family?

The term, family, has been defined in many ways. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2003) defines family as the basic unit in society traditionally consisting of two parents rearing their children, or a group of persons of common ancestry (p. 452). The families of today are very diverse, including the traditional families of father, mother, and biological children, blended families, families led by homosexual parents, and single parent families.

Copeland and White (1991) note that families are distinguishable from other groups because they have a shared history, future and biology as well as a built-in power hierarchy (pp. 4-5). White and Klein (2002) define the distinguishing features of a family to be as follows.

1. Families last for a considerably longer period of time than do most other social groups.
2. Families are intergenerational.
3. Families contain both biological and affinal (e.g., legal, common-law) relationships between members.
4. The biological (and affinal) aspect of families links them to a larger kinship organization (pp. 19-21).

For the purposes of this work, family is defined as the intergenerational persons living in a basic unit of society with a common history and future who share biological and affinal relationships among themselves and with a larger kinship organisation.

What is violence?

Violence is defined in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2003) as "exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse" (p. 1396). To commit an act of violence is to violate another person, to trespass their personal boundaries. There are many forms of violence: physical, emotional, mental, financial, and spiritual. All the forms except physical violence are very difficult to recognise. When a person has been physically violated, they know it. Even if they are intoxicated and in a state of being unable to recall the exact nature of the abuse, they recognise at some level that they have been violated. Because it is noticeable in its presence, it is also noticeable in its absence. When the violence stops, its cessation is noticeable.

This is not necessarily true for emotional, mental, financial, and spiritual abuse. The acts perpetuated by the abuser may seem insignificant, not worth mentioning, they may have been a figment of imagination, or they may be the *normal* way to relate to others. The abused person may never recognise that they have been violated. If they cannot be certain that abuse has taken place, then they cannot be certain that it has stopped. The cessation from emotional, mental, financial, and spiritual abuse may be so gradual that it can be nearly impossible to note. For this reason, for the purpose of this work, the focus is on physical violence, the exertion of physical force with the intent to injure or abuse by one or more adults on another person or persons in an intimate partner relationship.

Violence can also be viewed as a way of communicating, "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviours" (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, p. 251). Family violence, therefore, is defined as an injurious mode of communication whereby the exertion of physical force with the intent to injure or abuse is used by one or more family members on other family members.

What is healing?

To heal is defined in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2003) as "to make sound or whole, to restore to health, to cause to be overcome (mend), to restore to original purity or integrity" (p. 574). Aaron Antonovsky, an Israeli medical sociologist, pioneered the study of healing when studying Nazi concentration camp survivors. Antonovsky's (1979) work concentrated on people who were judged to be in reasonably good mental health, and introduced the salutogenic or healing approach to disease. Sanford (1990), a psychotherapist and social worker, extended the work in healing in her descriptive study of twenty healthy adults, each of whom experienced extensive trauma in earlier life yet were able to heal and to progress to the point where they could see the gifts that they now had as the result of their healing from the abuse. Her work, however, involved only the abuse victims, and did not examine the perpetrators of the abuse, the family and the community.

In Struthers, Lauderdale, Nichols, Tom-Orme, and Strickland (2005), J. Lauderdale talked about knowing medicine men and women who were eager to share their views on traditional healing with nursing and/or medical students because they believed that the patient's care would be then more complete. All of them discussed spiritual, emotional, and physical healing and how traditional healing can work in conjunction with Western medicine when viewed as a so-called partnership (p. 195). Lane, Bopp, Bopp, and Norris (2002) recorded lessons about healing in Aboriginal communities. United Indians for All Tribes Foundation Planning and Development Committee (2006) summarised these lessons:

- Healing is possible for individuals and communities. Both appear to go through distinct stages.
- The healing journey is a long-term process, probably involving several decades.
- Healing cannot be confined to issues such as addictions, abuse or violence.
- Healing interventions and programs have most impact when they take place within the context of a wider community development plan.
- Community healing requires personal, cultural, economic, political, and social development initiatives woven together into a coherent, long-term, coordinated strategy (p. 2).

For the purpose of this work, healing from family violence means the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual process whereby the intimate partners and their families are transformed from a state of injury or damage to a state of greater well-being.

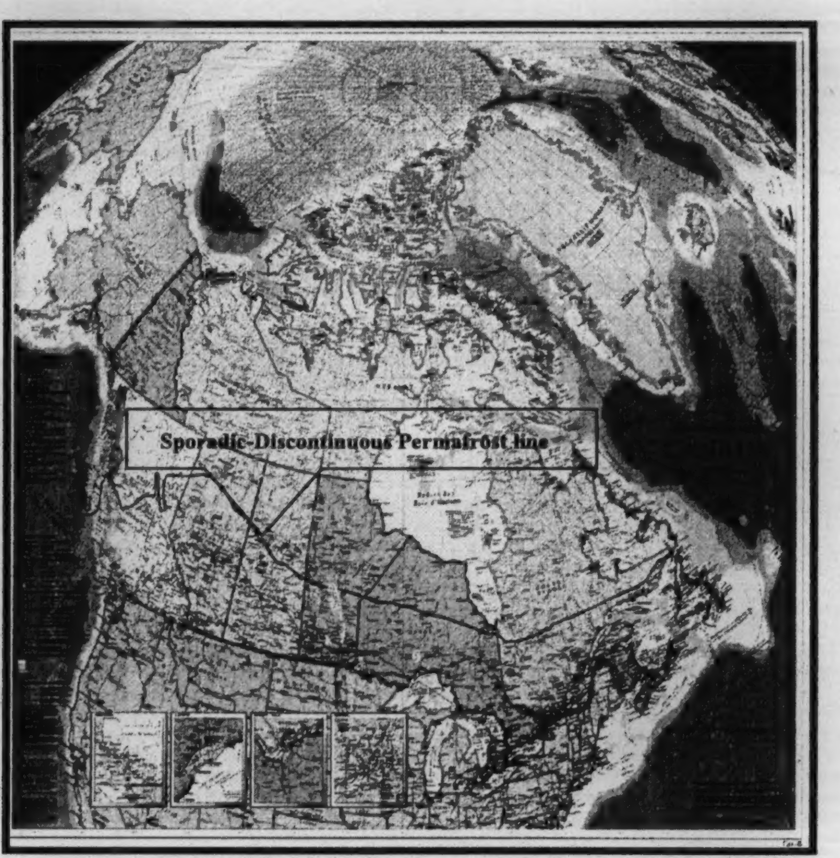
What is north?

The enigmatic phrase of "the North" has been constantly evolving. It is usually based on physical characteristics such as degrees of latitude and human elements such as isolation. Thomas Berger (1988) referred to north as a geographical region, specifically “the area of North America that lies on or north of the 60th parallel, and more specifically, the region encompassing the Yukon and Northwest Territories” (p. 33). Rohmer (1970) identified the Mid-Canada Corridor as part of the north, a vast resource-rich area region of rivers, lakes and forest that lay north of the plains area and south of the Canadian tundra. The political boundaries show Mid-Canada to fall in the southern parts of the Yukon, Northwest, and Nunavut territories along with the northern part of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland. Coates and Morrison (1992) described this same region, the sub-arctic region of Canada as the "Middle North" or "Forgotten North" because they have been long ignored, politically weak, and economically unstable (p. 1). Malcolm (2005) noted that the people of Mid-Canada thought of their regions primarily in terms of drainage basins of land and water. Rick Laliberte, Member of Parliament for Churchill River from 1997 to 2004, expressed this view of the region when he said, "Canada is a nation of rivers and a river of nations" (Laliberte, 2004). Grace (2002) explained that for W.I. Morton, a noted historian of the north, the term refers to all that territory beyond the line of minimal growth of the known cereal grains" (p. 63). While the combination of Berger's geographical definition, Rohmer's Mid-Canada Corridor, and Morton's territory north of the cereal grain growth each explain a different aspect of the concept of *north*, their definitions are either too detailed or too vague to be viable.

Bone (2003) explained Hamelin's (1979) proposed method of measuring northern-ness or *nordicity* by using ten physical and human indicators including summer heat, annual cold, accessibility, and economic activity. Hamelin divided the north into four main areas: Extreme North, Far North, Middle North, and Near North based upon calculations using weighted values of the indicators (p. 150). This method explained the north very well, but its necessity to conduct ongoing calculations of indicators proved unwieldy as a snap-shot definition of north

An easily measurable definition of north used by SSHRC (n.d.) is north of the southern limit of sporadic discontinuous permafrost. Within this definition of north is Rohmer's mid-Canada corridor, Malcolm's drainage basin, most of Hamelin's nordicity indicators, Morton's north of the known cereal grain region, and Berger's north of 60. North of the southern limit of sporadic discontinuous permafrost is also used by the Northern Scientific Training Program (NSTP) of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada as illustrated in Figure 1 and is the definition that is used in this study.

Figure 1: Sporadic-discontinuous permafrost line



(Modified from the map retrieved on August 26, 2007 from http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nstp/nstpmp_e.htm)

What is Aboriginal?

Merriam-Webster (2003) defines aboriginal as "being the first or earliest known of its kind present in a region" (p. 3). In Canada, the term is used to denote Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people including those who regained status after June 28, 1985 when the Canadian government passed Bill C-31, An *Act to Amend the Indian Act* (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1995).

Chapter 3: Aboriginal family violence: An all too common phenomenon

Statistics: Violence in Aboriginal communities

Statistics indicate that among Aboriginal couples in North America intimate partner violence continues to be a much too common phenomenon. Tjaden and Thoennes (2000) note that in the United States and Alaska, Indian and Inuit women rank among the most at risk groups for violence. Two recent studies note somewhat different, but very high rates of spousal assault rates among Canadian Aboriginal people, paralleling the statistics of the United States of America. Kiyoshk (2003) reported that while the overall spousal assault rate is reported at eight percent in Canada, the rate is between 40-90 percent in Canadian Aboriginal communities. In a Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics report released in June 2006, Brzozowski et al. (2006) concluded that while Aboriginal people accounted for about three per cent of the Canadian population between 1997 and 2004, 21 percent reported having experienced some form of physical or sexual violence by a spouse in the five years preceding the 2004 survey. This compared to six percent of non-Aboriginal people who experienced intimate partner violence over the same time period. Thus, the statistics seem to point toward intimate partner violence as a much too common phenomenon among Aboriginal couples in North America,

What about violence in northern Canadian communities? Statistics Canada is now beginning to separate statistical data for southern and northern communities, using the "north of 60" definition for north, a definition that is based upon political boundaries that do not take other indicators of nordicity into account. As yet, statistics do not delineate the prevalence of violence in the communities north of the southern limit of sporadic discontinuous permafrost but south of the "north of 60" political boundaries. For this research, therefore, it is assumed that violence is as least as prevalent in those northern communities as it is in southern communities.

Finding a solution

With the statistics revealing the prevalence of intimate partner violence in Canada, the next logical question is, "What can be or is being done about it?" There are programs for men who abuse their partners. Provincially, these programs are found in the Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centres, the Buffalo Narrows and Battlefords Community Correctional Centres, the Spiritual Healing Lodge in Prince Albert, and the Besnard Lake Correctional and Saskatoon Urban Camps while the program for violent women in the provincial correctional system is located in Pine Grove in Prince Albert (Government of Saskatchewan Corrections and Public Safety, 2007). Federally, the Government of Canada run Prince Albert Penitentiary provides programs for males while the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge near Maple Creek, SK provides programs for females (Correctional Service of Canada, 2005).

What about programs for those whose violence has not caused them to be imprisoned? Life skills and anger management programs of a short duration may be offered by the provincial Health and Social Services department, by Health and Social Services departments from the bands, or by community agencies. In general, these programs have funding to provide short-term programs. The programs may be based upon programming that has been shown to be successful in more populated, southern areas. The programs are typically based on non-Aboriginal philosophies, thereby providing weak or no cultural fit for Aboriginal clients accessing them. Thus for the northern Canadian Aboriginal client, government sponsored programming to help them rid themselves of violence is generally short in duration and culturally less than optimal.

Where else can people go for help? In the small communities in northern Saskatchewan people can access help from community or spiritual elders, including medicine men and women, priests or preachers, pipe carriers, deacons, lay readers, and kitchen table counsellors who have healed from violence. Twelve-step self-help groups such as AA or Al-Anon generally meet in the larger centres of northern Saskatchewan, while they may or may not be able to sustain on-going self-help meetings in the smaller northern Saskatchewan communities. People who are looking for help can also turn their sights on role models. All people and especially Aboriginal people learn from role models. Eastman (1999) said, "We watched the men of our people and acted like them in our play then learned to emulate them in our lives" (p. 17). Children and youth learn from role models. When they watch those who are violent, they learn to be violent. When they watch those who experience violence, they learn to accept violence from others. Similarly, when they watch those who are not violent, then they learn how to resolve conflict without violence.

Those who were violent in their past and have overcome it may now be role models to other community members, to members of similar communities and similar situations, and to practitioners and policy-makers. People in the community, especially those who are acting in violent ways but wanting to stop, may benefit from role models and acquire new conflict resolution skills as they watch the once-violent person use his/her new skills. If they are in the same community, they can speak to the role models and ask them for ways to stop the violence. If they secretly want to stop, they can watch the role models and imitate their actions.

Other people in the community may not be so fast to accept the changes in the once-violent person because the process of healing takes a long time and the memory of the violence often lives on in the minds of members of the community long after the person has stopped the abuse. Community members may not notice the cessation of the physical violence because it is usually accompanied by aggressive mannerisms as well as any or all of verbal, emotional, financial, and spiritual abuse. Even after the physical violence stops, much hard work and time are necessary before the mannerisms that accompany the violence stop. Stopping verbal, emotional, financial and spiritual abuse necessitates an attitude and behaviour change. People may continue to be afraid of any signs of aggression such as a raised voice, a clenched first, close proximity, or a formidable stance. Thus, not everyone in the community will agree that the once-violent person is no longer violent.

People in similar communities or similar situations may also benefit from role models. As they hear the healing story of the role-model family, they can learn to imitate their attitudes and behaviours. People in helping positions in the communities are often overwhelmed with the amount of work that needs to be done. They may be using techniques that seem to be inadequate, culturally inappropriate, or inappropriately focussed. A person or family that has stopped the violence may act as a role model to practitioners. First, the role model person or family has accessed available resources and secondly, they are applying those resources in a culturally-appropriate way. The practitioners may read this account of healing, recognise similarities in their communities, learn what worked for the role models and apply them.

Policy makers can too learn from this family's story. This family accessed programs that were available in their community during a certain policy era. Although the political, economic, and historical climate is now different, policy makers can learn what policies aided this family to heal, and apply that knowledge to the policies of the day. One family's healing story can be a very powerful aid to community members, families in similar communities or situations, to practitioners, and to policy makers.

Chapter 4: Doing the research project

Introduction

My dog, Squeaky, and I were taking our evening walk. "I would like to let you in on a little secret," I told him. "I do not know what I am doing!" Squeaky sniffed at a tree, as if to say, "What is the worst that could happen? You could fail? All major works are fraught with failure. My advice to you is, try it anyway." With Squeaky's words of wisdom in mind, I set out to conduct a research project.

The first step in conducting research, my professors said, was to identify a research paradigm. Guba (1990) listed four research paradigms: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, and constructivism, which were rooted in three streams of ontological thought: realism, critical realism, and relativism. Positivism, the idea that "knowledge of realities driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms can be conventionally summarised in the form of time-and context-free generalisations" (p. 18) is rooted in realism, the belief that 'reality exists out there' (p. 19). Post-positivism, "although a real world driven by real natural causes exists, it is impossible for humans truly to perceive it" (p. 20), is also based in realism. Critical theory which "works to rally participants around the true viewpoint" is based in critical realism, that "there is a reality but it is mediated by the values of the researcher" (pp. 23-25). "Constructivism is relativistic. It neither predicts, controls or transforms the world. It holds that the only reality that exists is in the mind of its constructors" (p. 27).

I needed to decide which research paradigm fit with me. Neither positivism with its emphasis on complete objectivity nor post-positivism with its exclusion of anything but the real natural causes of the real world fit. I wondered if I fit into critical realism or constructivism. The question, to me, was, "Did I believe that truth existed, as in critical realism, or was truth something that I constructed entirely on my own as in constructivism?" I thought back to my own life journey and remembered the first time, in the spring of 1984, when I realised that not only was there a power greater than myself but that this power was willing and capable of helping me. I was a stay-at-home mother at the time, caring for twin baby girls. It was a difficult period of my life, not only was I suddenly responsible for the lives of two helpless human beings, but I had almost no money, and for the first time in my life, was rendered powerless to get a job. I was constantly sleep-deprived and frustrated. One day I got particularly angry at something, and went to shut a window in my house. The rage within me was transmitted to the muscles in my arms and, as I shut the window, I did so with such force that I broke four panes of glass. I was aghast, and knelt down in the middle of the broken glass and gave the God that I was no longer sure of an ultimatum. I said, "You have got to get me out of here. I cannot take this any longer." It was not much of a prayer but it was said from the depth of my being.

I got off my knees, cleaned up the glass, and replaced the window. At the end of that week, I was called to work at two places, and to volunteer my time at another. What was interesting, though, was that I had not applied for work anywhere for more than six months! I got a babysitter, accepted one of the jobs, and began working. As I worked, I reflected upon what had happened to me. I began to believe that I had prayed, albeit very badly, and that my prayers had been answered. I could no longer try to believe that there was no higher power. I had to believe that there was something out there, some sort of force or deity, and that deity had responded to my plea. There was a reality somewhere that did not seem to need understanding from me. It was my first spiritual experience.

In the years following, my life gradually made a turn toward better times and I had several more spiritual experiences. I began a system of worship through which I began to acquire a higher system of values and morals to aspire toward. Later, I began working as a counsellor. When a client entered my office, it was my job to try to help them through whatever dilemma that had brought them there. I did that by first believing that there was a better place for them (a reality that was mediated by my values as per critical realism) and second, that they could get there. Then I used the skills that I had acquired to help them find that better place for themselves. That way of interacting with clients fit within my paradigm of critical theory, I was working "to rally them around a true viewpoint" (Guba, 1990, pp. 23-25).

As a budding researcher, therefore, I realised that I did believe that there was a reality somewhere. My values and morals taught me that it was never my place to impose that reality on another person; instead my silent but very strong belief that the other person with whom I interacted could get to a place of better reality for them shaped my thoughts, words, and exchanges with them and affected the outcome of our interactions. As my belief shaped my thoughts in my counselling in this study, it shaped the reality of the project. I knew then that I aspired to critical realism.

The next step in conducting research was to understand the research process. Creswell (2002) defined research as "a cyclical process of steps that typically began with identifying a research problem or issue of study. It then involved reviewing the literature, specifying a study purpose, collecting and analysing data, and forming an interpretation of the information. The research culminated in a report" (p. 8). There were two realms of research. Quantitative research concerned itself with populations and samples and tested a hypothesis, while qualitative research focused on the study of cases (Gall et al., 2003, p. 24) and sought to ask the correct questions. I had some ideas as to what the research process would entail.

The next step, according to my instructors, was to decide upon a research topic. Luckily, my objective in attending university as a mature student was to learn more about family violence so that I could better help troubled families in remote northern communities where a large number of Aboriginal people reside. I knew that the traditional learning paradigm for Aboriginal people was through story-telling. Therefore, I believed that the best way that an Aboriginal family could learn about healing from family violence was to read or hear a story about how another family healed.

I could look at family violence in terms of its underlying processes, i.e., what made people become violent, or I could look at family violence in terms of the steps that people used to stop violence in their lives, i.e., what made people become non-violent. I thought back to the Aboriginal people that I had worked with. Their preference was to discuss ways of becoming healthy. I scanned the literature and although there were many studies on family violence, I could find no research on how families healed from family violence. I decided to conduct my research on how violent families from remote northern Canadian communities became non-violent.

Deciding upon the research: A cyclical process

Deciding upon this research was a cyclical process involving the communities and the university. I would get a vague idea of the research to be conducted, then make some phone calls to the community where the research might be conducted, consult with a few people there, receive their feedback and new ideas and ponder it further. In the meantime, a university thesis advisory committee was formed. Dr. Cindy Jardine, as my thesis advisor, had expertise in northern research. Dr. Jude Spiers was an expert in qualitative research, while Dr. Derek Truscott had expertise in family violence. The committee made themselves available to me and as the ideas came, I was able to consult with them.

One family in one of the northern communities had been previously immersed in alcoholism and violence and was now living with neither dysfunction. They had been active in trying to help their communities to heal. I wondered if they were still interested. I telephoned them and they told me that they were. I told them what I had been learning in classes and what I had found in the literature. Because they had struggled with violence within themselves and their own family, they were very interested in the ideas that were coming to me. We decided to meet in person in their home community to further discuss ideas.

On January 22, 2004, I met with the husband and neighbour and the wife and niece. We talked about the problems in the communities and agreed that family violence was an important topic of research. I went back to the university and the literature. Over the next few months I telephoned them a number of times and we tossed ideas around. Through the iterative process of thought, discussion, reading the literature, more thought, and more discussion, I decided with the family that I should document a story of healing from family violence and more specifically, that I should conduct a case study that would document their story of healing.

Why choose them? Johnson (1990) identified the factors one should take into account when selecting participants for research. Selected individuals were to be (1) geographically accessible, (2) willing to participate in the research and share their experiences, and (3) having had reflected and thought about the research issues at hand. This family fit the bill in all three factors. Moreover, they were a deviant case. An attorney who practised family law once told me that very few couples overcame intimate partner violence and continued to stay together. He said, “I work with many divorces but I have not yet seen a marriage that was saved where there was both alcoholism and violence in the relationship” (Allan Lees, attorney, personal communication, 1988).

This family was willing to participate in the research and share their experiences because they trusted me; they knew me because I had lived and worked in the wife’s home community in the early to mid 1990s. The people of that community had learned about my background during the first few weeks of employment there. One day, an older Aboriginal man came into my place of work, poured himself a cup of coffee, and sat in silence stirring his coffee. I waited for him to speak. After a while, he asked, “Who are you?” I responded by reviewing my credentials and educational history. The man listened, shook his head, and then elaborated, "Who are you? Who is your mother? Who is your father? Where were you born? Who are you?" I directly answered those questions, the man nodded, then went away (personal communication with Aboriginal man, name unknown, May 1993). I had begun to build trust in the community.

Study participants

The family, whom I have identified by acronyms for reasons that shall be discussed in the section *Choosing names for the participants*, visited my home. HA, the husband (see his story in Appendix A), and WA, the wife, (see Appendix B for her story) wanted to be in this study. They knew that they had resolved many of the problems with which they had been besought and that they had a story to tell that others might want to listen to. They knew that they were a deviant case; very few other couples who exchanged marital violence grew into a healthier relationship. The hurt that they had experienced and perpetuated in their shared past could be used to help others. With their stories of overcoming the violent life-style and their walk to a healthier way of life, they could become role models for others wishing to overcome violence in their own lives.

Other possible participants were discussed. HA and WA were certain that their children, SNA (the son - see his story in Appendix C) and DA (the daughter - see her story in Appendix D) would readily agree to participate. We talked about HA and WA's siblings, relatives, and parents, and a number of them were targeted as possible participants, with each of their stories included in a separate appendix: BA (the brother - see Appendix E), SA (the sister - see Appendix F), LA (the little brother - see Appendix G), NA (the niece - see Appendix H), FA (another family member) and GA (the grandmother). We also decided that FD (the friend - see his story in Appendix I), NR (the neighbours - see their stories in Appendix J), and MW (a community member) would be approached as possible study participants. As HA and WA were leaving my house, I told them that studies such as this one usually had pseudonyms assigned to the participants. I asked them to think of a pseudonym for themselves, and that I would be talking to them about their choice at a later date. It was an exciting and productive visit.

At the beginning of May, 2004, I met with Cindy Jardine and gave her a brief overview of the project. On May 27 I submitted an outline of my project to her; we met and she organised an advisory team meeting. On June 7, 2004, I verbally outlined the project to Cindy, Jude, and Derek. They asked me to write a proposal and suggested that I write one quickly because there was a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) funding opportunity under the Northern Development Program due June 25, 2004 that might help fund the logistics of conducting the research.

Before I began writing, I consulted the policy statement outlining the ethical conduct for research involving humans of the Tri-Council[1] consisting of SSHRC, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). Next, I reviewed the ethical standards from the University of Alberta Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics Research Ethics Board[2] (AFHE REB) which were based on Tri-Council standards. Because I was proposing to conduct research in a northern community, I reviewed the ethical standards document of the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies[3] (ACUNS). Because the northern community was settled with Aboriginal people, I reviewed Buller's (2004) *The Hollow Water Cost-Benefit Analysis Study*. Keeping the principles of these three ethics documents in mind, I wrote a research proposal which promised the deliverables of a thesis and report to the funding bodies, a video that would be given to the family to distribute at their discretion, and a community workshop. On June 17, 2004 presented my proposal to Cindy, Jude and Derek. The team revised and accepted the proposal on June 24 and applied for a SSHRC Northern Development Grant. The grant was approved at the end of September 2004. Further funding was received from a C/BAR Grant from the Canadian Circumpolar Institute in 2005.

In October 2004 I submitted an ethics proposal for presentation to the AFHE REB. The proposal included copies of the sheets that would be given to and signed by the participants. The participants' Consent to Participate (see Appendix K) was finalised, as was the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix L). Because telling their stories could trigger traumatic experiences for the participants or interviewer, a Contact List of professional help was developed for both north-eastern Saskatchewan (see Appendix M) and for Edmonton (see Appendix N). Guiding Questions (see Appendix O) were developed to help the participants tell their stories. The Debriefing Sheet (see Appendix P) was developed to give to the participants at the end of the study. Because there was likely going to be a great deal of data, an outside person would be contracted to transcribe the data. This person would have to keep everything that they transcribed as confidential, therefore a Transcriber's Oath of Confidentiality (see Appendix Q) was developed. The finalised proposal was presented to the AFHE REB. Permission to conduct the research was granted provided that the project would receive written approval from the leaders of the two First Nations communities.

Community approval for the study

On October 31, 2004 I travelled to La Ronge and Sandy Bay in northern Saskatchewan, the two communities where data would be gathered, and Prince Albert to obtain written support for the project from the band councillors and chiefs of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Approval to conduct the study was granted by the Lac La Ronge Indian Band on November 1, 2004. This was not surprising; in my work in La Ronge during the 1990s, I had gained the trust of one of the band councillors by working closely with him. I explained the nature of my study to him and he not only gave his support to the study but also obtained support from the rest of the elected officials of the Lac La Ronge Indian Band.

Chief Ron Michel of the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation did not grant immediate approval for the study. I faxed the information about the study to him, requesting that he would approve my conducting a study with members of his band. He granted me a meeting with him and listened as I outlined the research project. He was kind but would neither write a letter approving the study nor sign the letter of approval that I had brought with me. I travelled back to Edmonton, telephoned HA, and told him what had happened with the Chief. HA listened to me and told me not to worry, that the Chief simply had not understood the intent of the study. HA met with the Chief, explained the study and gave his sanction for it. Chief Ron Michel granted his approval on January 3, 2005.

The revisions to the ethics proposal, along with the letters of endorsement from the Lac La Ronge Indian Band and the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation were submitted to the chair of AFHE REB. The project was granted full approval, and on January 13, 2005 we received the AFHE Human REB Approval certificate (see Appendix R). I could now begin to collect data.

An ethnographic narrative case study

The research project was designed to study a particular phenomenon rather than a population. It was, therefore, qualitative research. The study was ethnographic; as a person of Eastern European ethnicity, I immersed myself in the culture of the Woodland Cree people, became close to the study participants, explored their world, worked to understand their relationships, and tried to look through their eyes (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998) so as to begin to understand their worldview.

I studied the essential elements in the Aboriginal worldview. There was the element of wholeness and inclusiveness, rather than exclusiveness. Global Virtual Classroom quoted an American Sioux creed (n.d.) which stated, "I am one with the land. It is my mother and my father. From the land I came and to the land I will go." The element of wholeness extended into a social network of family and community so that the statement, "I and the community are one" was also a true statement. To conduct research that was respectful of the wholeness and inclusiveness of the Aboriginal worldview thus meant that the research was conducted with the community rather than with one individual member of the community.

Erickson (1986) had written that one could use any number of methods in a qualitative research project. Creswell (1998) defined ethnography as a description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system (p. 58) often written in a literary, almost storytelling approach that helped to make the reader feel like they had walked in the participant's shoes (p. 59). The ethnographic narrative case study research report was written as a story that kept the reader feeling close to the research process and the participants.

Why case study research?

It became apparent that the research project was a case study since it documented multiple viewpoints of one story. Case study research has been defined as both a research methodology and a way of designing research (Bryar, 1999). It is a multi-lens (Stake, 1995), "in-depth investigation into a phenomenon" (Castleden, 2002, p. 29) which may be a "process, event, person, or thing" (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003, p. 436). "Research questions that ask *why* and *how* are best answered by a case study" (Yin, 2003, p. 7). Bryar (1999) concluded that the definition which achieved general consensus of the research community was, "Case study is a research strategy or design which makes use of multiple methods of data collection, straddling and making use of methods as appropriate in relation to the questions being examined" (p. 64). The research questions that were best answered by case study, then, were like the one that had been developed for this project. They required a comprehensive, intensive, in-depth, and multi-lens view of a phenomenon.

Why narrative enquiry?

The ethnography was also a narrative study because it chronicled a family's story of healing. The literary approach to the ethnography would be to write it as a series of stories that comprised a narrative. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2003) defined narrative as "the representation of an event or story" (p. 825), whereas Polkinghorne (1988) referred to it as "a kind of organisational scheme expressed in story form" (p. 13). According to Lieblich (1998), the story was "constructed around a core of facts or life events yet allowed a wide periphery of freedom of individuality and creativity in selection as well as emphasis on and interpretation of remembered facts" (p. 8). Emden (1998) offered that "a narrative was much more than an aimless string of words; it had parts to it; it was constructed; it conveyed meaning" (p. 35). King (2003) said it succinctly, "The truth about stories is that, that is all we are" (p. 2).

It seemed that one had to be a constructivist to do narrative research. More reflection was required. It was true that stories were constructed and that they represented one view of reality that fully represented the person telling them. But it was also true that stories were told to an audience in a context of place and time and that the audience as well as the context affected the story that was told. Personal bias of the researcher affected everything from the questions that were asked to the interpretation of the answers that were given. As the researcher recipient with a critical realist bend who believed that all people were constantly evolving to a better reality, I knew that my personal bias would affect the stories that were told to me. The consequent narrative that would emerge would not be the event itself but rather a representation of the incident that helped to organise its elements into a cohesive whole.

Lieblich (1998) defined narrative research as "research that used or analyzed narrative materials" (p. 2), while Gough (1993) said that narrative research was the outcome of a desire to unearth the manner in which individuals and groups "constructed their experiences of the world" (p. 175). Clandinin and Connelly (1986) asserted that "narratology was the study of how humans made meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about themselves that both refigured the past and created purpose for the future" (p. 137). Narrative research seemed to use the stories that people told to help understand the way that they reconstructed their experiences of the past and created their future.

The work of narrative research was interpretive; it was "personal, partial, and dynamic" (Shaw, 1999, p. 23). It became clear to me that this statement would be true in the research that I was undertaking. Each person involved in the research, including the researcher, told a story that explained a past event, and in the telling, understood that past event to a greater degree. It was in the greater understanding of past events that the narrator created a new future for him or herself. Thus, each of us involved in the research project would create a new future for ourselves simply by telling our stories: the participants would tell their stories of violence and healing, and I would tell my story of conducting the research project. The story telling would change us in the present. Because we would be changed in the present, our futures would change.

Narrative research allowed inclusion of the stories in their entirety, important in this research for several reasons. One reason was that the voices of Aboriginal people have been silenced for many generations. This research could also be accused of silencing Aboriginal people, because I was Caucasian, my cultural roots stemming from Eastern Europe, while the majority of the participants were Aboriginal of Woodlands Cree origin. However, the participants trusted me; it was their wish to tell their stories to me. In her story, NA said, "I have had people ask me before to share my story with them and I just did not feel right because I looked at their intention and what it was like. I know that you are doing your work in an honourable way. Therefore, I can give you what you need."[4]

Narrative research was the best fit for this research for six reasons. First, it was a good fit because the Aboriginal culture was traditionally transmitted through storytelling or narrative. Polkinghorne (1988) wrote about "the importance of having research strategies that can work with the narratives that people use to understand the human world" (p. 15). Narrative, the traditional medium for knowledge transmission in the Aboriginal world, could help the study participants teach others. "Stories were a powerful vehicle for understanding the worldview of a culture" (Daigle, 2002, p. 12) and therefore continued to be the "cultural mode of reasoning and representation" (Fraser, 2004, p. 180). It was through storytelling that the participants were provided with opportunities to narrate and reconstruct stories that helped to make sense of their experiences Ricoeur 1981, Smith 1981, White 1981, Connelly and

Clandinin 1986, 1990, Sacks 1986, 1992, Riessman 1990, 1991, 1993, Bruner 1991, Clandinin and Connelly 1994, Wiltshire 1995, and Bailey 2001 while shaping and constructing their personality and reality (Lieblich, 1998). By making sense of their life events, they were able to grow on a personal level.

In this study, the participants who once participated in and experienced physical violence in their family talked about their lives. In sharing their life stories, they reconstructed their experience of both violence and healing. The reconstruction of events helped them to make meaning of them. NA alluded to this in her story. "It was the first time that we talked about that stuff about a month ago because the stuff that you have been going around talking to my family and that is making people think. It has been painful, but in a good way because people are saying what they have not had the nerve to say before this" (NA's story, p. 481).

The second reason that narrative enquiry was deemed to be a best fit for this research was that it sought to understand the stories not of a population, but of a particular case. Struthers et al. (2005) stated that "many of us were taught that we speak for no one but ourselves" (p. 194), while Allen Sapp, a Cree man from central Saskatchewan, recorded similar words told to him by his grandmother.

> There are some things
> That you can call your very own.
>
> Your stories, songs and beating heart
> Are truly yours and yours alone.
>
> A story is a sacred thing
> That should be passed from age to youth.
> I choose to share my best with you
> That you might own and share them too.

And never use another's tale
Unless he knows and he approves.
And only then and then alone
Might you tell it to others.
(Sapp and Bouchard, 2002, pp. 12-19)

The stories in this project were told by participants who spoke for themselves. The stories were gleaned from the interviews, written, then approved by the participants and included in this thesis in their entirety.

Third, the undercurrent of narrative enquiry was respect. Dillon (2007) identified three kinds of respect from Feinberg's (1975) work. First, respect was the "uneasy and watchful attitude that had an *element of fear i*n it." Second, respect involved "regarding the object of our respect as making a rightful claim on our conduct, as deserving moral consideration in its own right, independently of considerations of personal well-being." This form of respect was "owed to all humans equally." It was "the forms of polite respect and deference that acknowledged different social positions." Third, respect was "the special feeling of profound awe and respect that we have had in the presence of something extraordinary or sublime, a feeling that both humbled and uplifted us" (p. 7)

Respect was demonstrated by retention of the voice of the participants, where voice was defined by Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (2003) as a "wish, choice or opinion openly or formally expressed, or the right of expression and influential power" (p. 1401). Yusun Kang (2006) stated, "Meanings are conveyed differently in different cultures. It is necessary to examine longer discourse units" (p. 380). Robbins (2005) noted that

"American Indian speakers were the most eloquent and dynamic communicators." Thus, in keeping with Carr (1986) who proposed that "thoughts regarding personal human existence and character required an examination of personal identity in terms of what was referred to as *unity of life* or *coherence of a life-story*," narrative enquiry allowed for the retention of participants' voices in telling a coherent life story.

The Aboriginal value of respect was inherent to narrative research. Allen Sapp described his learning of respect, "My father, Alex, taught me to show respect, not only for the people but for everything that Manito[5] has put on the earth." (Sapp and Bouchard, 2002, pp. 27-28). Struthers et al. (2005) described ways of conducting research in a respectful manner:

> Identify the type of community; visit the cultural centre; attend a public event; visit historical sites; talk to the people; become familiar with local customs. Ask the people how they want to be addressed and how they want to be identified; what kind of family system do they have? Let the people reveal information about their community in their own way and in their own time (p. 196).

In this study, I followed the suggestions of Struthers et al. (2005). I visited different events and areas of the community. I attended a Sundance festival, an annual spiritual event for Aboriginal people who follow traditional spirituality, a public meeting in the community, and visited the community graveyard. I also drove to the Island Falls site, as well as interacted and talked to people in the community.

Sources of data

Data was generated by a number of methods: participant observation, participant and researcher reflection, audio and video-taped interviews, field notes, artefacts, and historical literature. I observed the participants during the interview process and recorded initial as well as reflective observations as my field notes. Participant and researcher reflections were also recorded in my field notes. The extensiveness of observation was demonstrated in the amount of time taken to gather the data. Fifty two days of observations and audio and video-taped interviewing were made in six trips to Sandy Bay, La Ronge, Creighton, and Vancouver. In January 2005 I shared meals, collected artefacts, and conducted interviews with HA, NA, WA, and MW. In the March 2005 trip, I attended a community meeting and a traditional ceremony as well as shared meals, collected artefacts, and conducted interviews with NA, WA, BA, SA , FD, DA, GA, FA, and NR. In July 2005, I attended a traditional ceremony, interviewed HA and LA, and shared meals with members of the community. In September 2006, I conducted group family meetings and shared meals with participants. During these trips, I observed the landscape, the communities, and family interactions and then made field notes. Second thoughts were added to the field notes during periods of later reflection. The field notes became a part of the available data.

I studied the history of the community of Sandy Bay. George Inkster, a social worker in the community during the 1970s and 1980s provided background knowledge of the community. He gave me a documentary filmed by the University of Regina, "Sandy Bay: The road to self sufficiency." I read Maggie Siggins' (2005) book, *Bitter embrace: White society's assault on the*

Woodland Cree; it provided a history of the people of the area. Official documents about the *Department of Northern Saskatchewan* (DNS)[6] were found in the government documents at the University of Saskatchewan. Documents regarding the history of the priests and the Catholic Church in the community of Sandy Bay, and especially Reverend Hector Thiboutot, O.M.I, were found in the Archives for the Roman Catholic Church, Ogle Hall, University of Saskatchewan. Websites on the history of Island Falls provided more background information, as did other books and papers. Archival information on the family was provided to me by members of the family through pictures, letters, and other artefacts.

Conducting research in an Aboriginal community

Fraser (2004) developed a list of eight considerations that the narrative researcher might follow:

(1) Know some of the socio-historical contexts of the participants' lives. When I began this study, I knew some of the socio-historical contexts of the participants' lives. I knew that HA and WA had been married for a long time, that they lived in two separate communities but visited each other frequently. HA's family had lived in the area for many generations; there were shamans in the family. HA spent time fishing and at his cabin. WA had lived in the area all her life, and was working in the helping field.

(2) Respond to the different communication style of each participant. In his interviews, HA tended to make large loops when he was explaining some aspect of his healing. I stayed engaged with HA's stories, even until he noted that he had gotten himself off topic, "I am going to get myself mad. I

guess I had better shut up [Both laugh]."[7] In a similar vein, BA and SA arrived at the same time for the interview. When I was going to interview them together, BA told me that he and SA were each going to talk to me separately even though they remained in the same room, "She has her views, and I have mine."[8] Mindful that their being in the same room would bias their responses, I responded to their wishes and interviewed them separately. BA and SA's stories were also written separately in Appendices E and F. The neighbours, a husband and wife, wished to be interviewed together. Because they were interviewed together, the neighbours' story, NRs' story (see Appendix J) was written as one story.

(3) Neither cross examine nor mine participants' information. Although I probed for more information, I accepted the participants' stories as shared. After the end of his interview, SNA remarked, "I expected you to ask me more questions. You know, I do not think I told you everything that I was thinking about. I missed out on some stuff. Can we do this again?" I respected his wishes and conducted a second interview with him a month later.

(4) Take care to be sensitive to the time frames of the researcher and participants. An example of taking care to be sensitive in this research was that because he was campaigning for Mayor of Sandy Bay, HA was unavailable for interviewing during the March 2005 trip. I attended a pre-election meeting and did not interview HA until July 2005.

(5) Create an atmosphere of trust. In this study, consenting to speak honestly about troubling life episodes required a great deal of trust. How was trust built? In a northern Aboriginal community, the researcher must be known to community members, as discussed by Castleden (2002). I spent time in the

community providing residents with an opportunity to get to know me as a person. This gave the community time to determine my suitability for pursuing my research question (p. 35). In the case of this research, the participants knew me because I had lived and worked in La Ronge in the early to mid 1990s. During my work in community development projects, people in the community asked me about my background, my beliefs, and my goals and I answered their questions honestly. We discussed our racial differences and the history of the oppression of the Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal settlers. They told me many stories which outlined how their voice had been systematically stifled. As we shared work experiences and stories, an atmosphere of trust was built that was not forgotten in the eight years that had elapsed from my time in the community to the time that this research project began.

(6) Allow participants to ask questions. In a relaxed interview dialogue, each of the participants asked questions and gave opinions about the interview process. They asked me questions which I would answer and I probed them with questions that arose in the context of the interview, taking care to maintain the conversation rather than to interrupt the participant's flow of thought (Morse and Richards, 2002, p. 93).

(7) Share interpretations during data analysis. Interpretations were shared in telephone conversations with the participants. As an example, in a telephone conversation with HA, I shared the interpretation of his being taken out of the bush leading to feelings of powerlessness and frustration. HA concurred with this interpretation.

(8) Consider the politics of doing research. I carefully considered the history and politics of a woman of non-Aboriginal descent documenting the stories of an Aboriginal family. The study was set up with active community input; the participants said that they chose to tell their story to me. The politics of doing research were also considered in the medium through which the results were returned to the community, specifically documentary video, workshops, and a written thesis. The research participants were given my telephone number and e-mail address, along with the telephone numbers of my thesis committee: Cindy Jardine, Jude Spiers, and Derek Truscott. Telephone numbers of university officials uninvolved in the research, Dr. F. Yeh, and Georgie Jarvis, were also provided (see *Participant Information Sheet,* Appendix L).

Interviewing the participants

The participants were each contacted and told that I was conducting a research study involving healing from family violence, and that the research was a case study of HA and WA's relationship. I told each participant about the importance of this kind of research, and that HA and WA had proposed their name as one who had been near to them during their years together. I told them who I was and gave them a bit of background regarding my interest in conducting this research. I asked each participant if they would be willing to find out more about the study and, if they consented after receiving that information, I gave a brief verbal description of what the study was about and why it might be important to have stories of healing from family violence documented in the academic literature. I then asked them if they would grant me an interview. If they consented to granting me an interview, I asked them if they would consent to audio-taping. I explained that the recorders would facilitate my being able to have accurate records of the interviews. Because each consented to audio taping, I then asked if they would consent to video taping. I explained that the video tapes would be used to make a documentary film that the family would be able to distribute at their discretion. Seven participants in six interviews (HA, WA, SNA, DA, NA, and NR) agreed to be video-taped.

I met with each participant for the interview at a time and place that was mutually agreed upon. I began the session by setting out the two audio recorders, a digital recorder that would act as the main recorder and a cassette tape recorder as a back-up. If the participants had agreed to be video taped, I set up lighting, seating, and context to facilitate video-taping. I then began the session by asking the participants whether they would consent to be interviewed and by offering them tobacco. Each one accepted the tobacco and thereby consented to be interviewed.[9] I then asked each participant if they would give me permission to use the recorders. Each participant gave permission and I turned the recorders on.

I explained the Consent to Participate (see Appendix K), gave each participant an Information Sheet (see Appendix L), and then went over each part of the sheet with each of them. I carefully pointed out the names of people who they could contact regarding the research. When they had read and understood the Information Sheet, I asked them to fill out and sign the Consent to Participate.

I then told each participant that the goal of the research was to document the healing story of a northern Canadian Aboriginal family. I told them that interviews would be conducted individually and together with other study participants as was deemed appropriate and consented to. I let the participants know that writing, art or other artefacts would be welcomed, reviewed, and used to better understand them and the family. I explained that they could consent to some or all parts of the interview, and that they could withdraw all or parts of what they had said until two weeks after they had received the transcripts of their interviews. The participants were told that I would be in the community for several weeks in total and that I would be asking for interviews at a mutually agreed upon time and place.

I therefore began the interview by asking a general question about the healing that had occurred in HA and WA's relationship. I conducted unstructured, interactive interviews with the participants following Fielding (1993) who noted that the unstructured interview could be guided by main topics (see *Guiding Questions*, Appendix O) and by Morse and Richards' (2002) description:

> Unstructured, interactive interviews are characterised by relatively few prepared questions which may be only one or more grand tour questions, although some researchers prepare approximately six to eight broad, open-ended questions. The researcher listens to and learns from the participant (p. 92), lets the participant tell his or her own story (p. 93) and may use unplanned, unanticipated questions as probes for clarification purposes (p. 94).

I started off the interviews by saying, "Tell me about your experiences of participating in or witnessing violence between HA and WA and tell me about how they healed from the violence." I had prepared a list of Guiding Questions (see Appendix O), but understood that to ask those questions initially could structure the interview and render it invalid (Morse and Richards, p. 93). Because the interviews were unstructured, each participant could talk about certain experiences and leave other experiences out as per their wishes. To facilitate on-going discussion and to keep the research on track, I used active listening skills and reflective and probing questions in the interview process.

As the interviews were ending, I asked the participants if they had anything further to add. That question was usually answered with a new thread of stories. When the interview was over, the participants were thanked for participating in the study. The digital and tape recorder were shut off. The participants were told that they would be mailed a fifty dollar gift certificate from a store of their choice. They named the store and it was recorded. I gave them a copy of the Debriefing Sheet (see Appendix P). Each participant wanted a copy of the thesis that resulted from the study. I asked the participants if I could phone them if I had any questions. Each participant granted me permission to phone them.

Some participants were interviewed more than once. Because all the recording equipment failed during the first interview in January 2005, I interviewed NA a second time in March 2005. SNA requested a second interview in September 2005 so that he could tell his story in full (see section, *Conducting research in an Aboriginal community*). HA was audio-taped in a

January 2005 interview, then audio and video-taped in a July 2005 interview. WA was audio-taped, then audio and video-taped in two March 2005 interviews.

When each interview was completed, further data was gathered in the recording of field notes. I recorded my observations, emotions, and thoughts either in written form or, if I was driving, by talking into my digital voice recorder, then transcribing the notes into written form at a later time. Second thoughts were added to the field notes during periods of later reflection added to the field notes.

In summary, interviews were conducted with NR, FD, LA, DA, GA, FA, BA and SA. I conducted two interviews with each of HA, WA, SNA, and NA. During my stay in the community, I observed family and community interactions, collected artefacts, reflected on my experiences, and wrote field notes. I followed up with participants as necessary by telephone and e-mail.

Confidentiality

Study confidentiality as specified in the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix L) was carefully discussed with the participants. I explained that the interview transcripts as well as typewritten notes from provided artefacts would be securely stored for a minimum of five years and that they might be looked at in the future to help answer other study questions as long as further permission was granted by the participants and a new study was approved by an ethics board. I noted that the transcripts, data, and written materials would be seen by no more than the following people: each participant (a copy of the transcript of their own interview), the thesis committee members, a transcriber who would sign an Oath of Confidentiality (see Appendix Q), and me. I explained that each participant was to instruct me as to whether or not they wished to have their name, face, or voice be attached to the information that they gave. I explained that information would be used privately unless professional ethics or laws under the Child Welfare Act required that it be reported.

Each participant was told that they could withdraw either all or parts of what they had said from the interview transcripts at any time until two weeks after they had received the story generated from their interview. In all cases but three, the participants told me that either HA or WA or both had talked to them at great length about the research and that they wished to be the central participants. These participants immediately agreed to participate. Of the three who did not immediately agree, one participant experienced a crisis in their life and became unable to participate, and one participant agreed after contacting HA or WA for verification of their submitting his name as a possible participant.

The remaining participant signed only after telling me that I was perpetuating a system whereby I was asking them to sign their name to a piece of paper that I had ultimate control over. I was told that in the past history of Aboriginal people, the paper of the white man was not worth the tree that gave up its life for it. I listened and assured him that the university was obliged to care for human research subjects through carefully thought out ethics, and that this project had passed all the ethical considerations. Those were the mechanics of ethics. I then told him that to me, the Aboriginal concept of respect went much deeper than ethics, and that I would follow the principles of respect. This was the spirit of ethics. He agreed then to be interviewed, but did not wish any of the family to know what he/she had said. Those wishes were adhered to. Any information from that participant was used anonymously.

Giving tobacco and gifts

Among the Woodland Cree who followed traditional Native spirituality, it was customary to give tobacco when asking a question. The giving of the tobacco was like submitting a proposal. It was not always accepted. It meant that you were asking the traditional person for their knowledge, wisdom, or truth. The person who practised Native spirituality seldom answered immediately. He would meditate on your proposal and then either accept or decline. Acceptance of the tobacco was like signing a contract. It meant that they would provide you with an answer to your query. The amount of tobacco that you were to give depended upon the complexity of the question. For a simple question, a small amount of tobacco such as a single cigarette would suffice. For a more complex question, it was customary to give a larger amount such as a pouch of tobacco. Once the tobacco was accepted, the person would give it as an offering to the Creator so that they would receive the knowledge, wisdom, and truth to pass back to you from the Creator.

The giving of a gift in addition to tobacco was a sign of respect for the Aboriginal person's time and effort especially when the question was complex or difficult and would require a great sacrifice of time and/or effort. The gift could be anything useful to the person. Kitchen equipment, house wares, and tools were common gifts, while gift cards were also acceptable.

Choosing names for the participants

The standard way of keeping confidentiality in qualitative research was to assign pseudonyms to the participants and to obscure the places that were being discussed. As data collection and analysis progressed in this study, it became clear that both methods of keeping confidentiality would be difficult to adhere to. First there was the matter of the pseudonyms. Because of the history of colonialism between the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people and because I am non-Aboriginal, I asked each of the participants to assign a pseudonym for themselves. I waited about six months and received no reply. Next I tried to assign HA and WA pseudonyms. When I told HA of the pseudonym that I had tentatively assigned to him, he immediately rejected it. I tried another, and he rejected that one as well. It became obvious that he was not going to accept a pseudonym. I had to try something else. I decided to call HA and WA by their relationship to each other. I named the participants Husband, Wife, Son, Daughter, Brother, Little Brother, Niece, Neighbours, Friend and Grandma. Attempting to call them by name of relationship, though, was problematic in two areas. First, using relationships made the participants seem too removed from the stories that they were telling. Second, writing them as their relationship became too clumsy, especially in cases where a participant was talking about their own relationship with a spouse or family member rather than the husband or wife in this study. Each participant had to get a pseudonym.

I then used the first initial of the relationship to denote each participant, except in the case of Sister and Son. In that case Sister became S and Son became SN. Using only one initial also became somewhat confusing, because in reading 'H,' I would often read 'He.' Each pseudonym had to have two initials. The second initial was used to denote a surname. Thus, Husband became HA, Wife WA, Son SNA, Daughter DA, Brother BA, Little Brother LA, Niece NA, Neighbours NR, Friend FD and Grandma GA.

Analysing the data

Morse (1999) said that "data analysis in qualitative inquiry is a systematic pattern of data collection-analysis-collection-analysis, ad infinitum" (cited in Mayan, 2001, p. 21). In keeping with this, data analysis began during initial data collection. So that I could keep all of the ancestors straight in my mind, I fashioned a paternal family tree based upon the information that I had received from the participants. I presented it to the family. The participants that saw the family tree added to it and corrected it as they told me more stories about ancestors. They wanted copies of it. I provided copies to family members when it was as complete as I could make it.

GA, HA's mother, also agreed to be interviewed. Because she was very hard of hearing and because she spoke fluently only in Cree, her son BA, offered to translate when I interviewed her. After the interview with her was complete, I asked him to translate the interview with her and offered to pay him. He became too busy, and was unable to do the translation. To date, the interview remains untranslated, thereby reducing the richness of the data and consequently, the rigour of the study.

I began familiarising myself with the data. During long road trips from my home to the University of Alberta and then from the University of Alberta to La Ronge, Sandy Bay and Creighton, I listened to the oral recordings of the interviews. The regular debriefing and analysis meetings with Cindy, Jude, and Derek were invaluable for helping to identify my biases and assumptions as well as to uncover the story that was beginning to form with the familiarising of the data. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed. When I received the transcriptions, I checked them by reading them as I listened to the interviews again. Next, I went through each transcription again with the aim to clean up the data. This time, I took out the repetitions that are common to oral narratives. I replaced contractions with full words and changed the names of the participants to the pseudonym initials that would identify them in the final narratives. I looked at the pictures and other artefacts, and spent time thinking about the data.

A next decision to be made was what method I would use to analyse the data. Should it be done on a line-by-line, word-by-word basis as is done in some qualitative research? It seemed to me that I had far too much data for that kind of analysis. Fraser's (2004) qualification that, "Even studies with relatively few participants are liable to produce many more stories that can be possibly analysed in any one article, report or thesis" (p. 186). I actively searched for a method of analysis that would represent the participants in their own voice.

Benoit, Carroll, and Chaudhry (2003) described thematic analysis, a method of analysis that has been widely used in social science and health research. Luborsky (1994) noted that thematic analysis provided "direct representation of an individual's own point of view and descriptions of experiences, beliefs, and perception" (p. 190). By placing participants' own perspectives front and centre, thematic analysis has given voice to those who were usually silenced. I decided to use thematic analysis.

When I was satisfied that I knew the content of the interviews and artefacts, I printed out the transcriptions and divided the interviews into story vignettes. I selected each vignette and pasted them into a separate file, then printed out the file of vignettes, cut them up, and wrote themes beside each vignette. I arranged and rearranged them until they were groupings of themes.

Producing the video

Part of the proposal to conduct this study had been producing a documentary based upon video taping of interviews. The rationale for producing a video was that the Aboriginal culture was traditionally an oral culture, and that the oral tradition persists to this day. A video of the story of healing could be one way that people could learn how to become non-violent. Because violence usually occurs in secret and usually is steeped in shame for the entire family, those who may need the most help cannot access it in a public forum. A video could be a private way to learn about stopping violence.

To produce the video, I watched each of the video tapes and read the corresponding interviews. I divided the video-taped interviews into story vignettes and recorded the tape number as well as the start and end time for each vignette. I then copied and pasted the vignette from the written transcript into a new word document for each person, printed out the word documents, and cut them into separate vignettes. Next, I chose the vignettes that would tell the most complete story of healing and put them into a logical story order, culling vignettes until I had approximately fifteen minutes of taped interviews. I listed the video number as well as the start and end time for each of the vignettes that I had chosen on a sheet of paper. I took my work to a professional video editor and watched in fascination as he took it and made it into a documentary film. I took the film back to the communities, watched it with them, received their feedback, and left copies of it for them to distribute as they deemed fit.

Participant's stories

The next step was to decide how to present the data in the written thesis. Given the history of colonialisation of Aboriginal people and the resultant loss of their voice, and given that I was of the dominant culture, I decided that the thesis needed to include the complete stories that were told to me in the interviews. I went back to the files of the story vignettes of each interview and began working with them to make them into coherent stories. I put the vignettes into an order that followed the sequence of "what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now."[10] Words and phrases that were repeated in the interviews were taken out while linking words were added as required. I continued working with each story until it seemed to be coherent and comprehensive.

Since coherence of the story did not necessarily mean accuracy, each participant's story was returned to him or her for verification. Any errors or omissions were corrected through e-mail and telephone conversations with the participants, and the story sent back for further verification until each participant found their story acceptable. The resulting stories are found in Appendices A to J.

The over-arching story

The next step was to combine the main events from all the participant's narratives as well as the accompanying artefacts and other accompanying documentation and to write one over-arching story from them. I fashioned a story outline which included the context, characterisations of the people involved in the story, and main events. The vignettes depicting critical events, crisis points, and weird events were grouped in chronological order so that the story would unfold in the same basic order that it happened. The result of this grouping became the audit trail for the project results.

This audit trail was then fashioned into a story plot, using the similarities and divergences of the participants' stories. The story of HA and WA's marriage began with some stories of where they came from, and then chronicled the events that shaped them into the partners that engaged in the *dance of violence.*[11] The plot then led through the growth that was occurring in the community and in the nation which affected their thoughts, beliefs, and actions, as their thoughts, beliefs, and actions were affecting their children, their families, their community, and their nation. HA's crisis points, first when he quit drinking and then when he had a heart attack were highlighted. WA's constant attempts to change herself and her circumstances in order to stop the violence were also documented. The story finished with the couple's beliefs as they were during the time of the interviews. The over-arching story is found in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Rigour

Rigour was described by Mayan (2001). Put simply, it asks the question, "Did we get the story right?" (p. 25) and "Is it transferable to contexts outside the study situations?" (p. 26)

Many verification strategies were employed to "get the story right." The first strategy was to realise that I was conducting this research in terms of my entire life experience. Objectivity was not possible. To help achieve rigour in the face of my inability to be objective, I bracketed my story so as to clarify my biases (see the section *Why me?*). A second strategy employed to achieve rigour was to have regular recorded debriefing meetings with my thesis advisors, Cindy, Jude, and Derek, in which they asked me "hard questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations" (Creswell, 1988, p. 202.) beginning from the time that the proposal to conduct the research was written, through the data collection phase, data analysis, interpretation, and writing stages. Because of the regular meetings with my advisors, my biases were uncovered, discussed, and reflected upon. New meanings, interpretations, and assumptions were uncovered and the study achieved a greater degree of rigour.

Participants were carefully selected for their knowledge of the research subject and their willingness to participate, ensuring thick, rich data. In turn, HA and WA helped to select other participants for the study, those who had seen the violence and then the healing from it. I built trust with the participants by prior knowledge of them and by a prolonged engagement (Mayan, 2001, p. 28) of more than 50 days in the community.

Validation in the research was achieved by checking the emerging story with the participants as well as peers. The checking of the emerging story was done by first mailing a copy of the transcribed interviews to the participants. Changes were made to the interviews as per the participants' feedback before the interview transcriptions were used again. Second, as soon as the participants' stories were written (see Appendices A-J), they were sent back to them for verification. Feedback was received from a number of the participants by mail, telephone, and e-mail, and appropriate changes were made to their stories. Third, an important step in making sure that the results were returned to the community and the emerging story was checked came with showing the participants the video which was made up of stories from their interviews. The feedback that was received from the showing of the video, about 18 months after the interviews had been conducted, was invaluable. First, SNA became excited; he talked about producing a movie from the documentary film. Second, I learned that there were parts of the story that had not been told to me. After he had seen the video, HA expressed concern that he had not told me his entire story; he wanted me to re-interview him and to add the data to this story. I discussed this request with my supervisor who told me that, in the interests of completing the study, I should wait until after it was done before I interviewed him a second time. I conveyed this message to HA and he agreed.

Further validation in the research by checking the emerging story was achieved by regularly consulting with HA and WA throughout the study. When they disagreed with the emerging story, changes were made to accommodate their understanding. In one discussion with WA, I talked about an interpretation, that the withdrawal of DNS funding was the beginning of the downslide of Sandy Bay as discussed by SNA. She disagreed. Instead, she recalled that the introduction of Bill C-31 divided the community and with that division, Sandy Bay began its downslide. The over-arching story reflected the change in my understanding of the story.

The research audit trail, a documentation of "the researcher's decisions, choices and insights" (Morse and Field, 1995, p. 147) was another verification strategy used in this research project. Field notes were regularly recorded as were thesis advisor meetings which kept track of major research decisions. Initial "Results" and "Discussion" chapters were also part of the audit trail.

Rigour was also achieved by methodological coherence (Mayan, 2001, p. 27) which demanded that the research question, the method, the emerging data, and the analytic procedures all matched. The initial research question for the study as submitted in the SSHRC proposal was "How does one man stop being violent to his wife when it continues in most if not all of the intimate relationships around them?" The emerging data exposed the importance of the history of the family and community as part of what could be learned to help others, thus adding to the research question and to the analysis procedures. Historical documents confirmed the participants' stories, while the participants' stories added humanity to the historical documents. The research question that emerged was, "How did a northern Canadian Aboriginal family who healed from intimate partner violence? What can be learned from their stories that might help others?"

A final verification strategy was thick, rich description so that the reader could decide whether findings of the study might be transferable. Thick, rich description was achieved by participatory observation of the family and community, by interviewing family and community members that best knew HA and WA by inclusion of field notes and collecting artefacts and by using them to enrich the description in the written document (see section entitled, *Introducing WA*). It was also achieved through documenting the region's history as confirmed by historical documents. In this study, the participants and setting including their history were described in detail, giving the reader a lot of information "to determine whether the findings can be transferred because of shared characteristics" (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen, 1993, p. 32).

In the final analysis, although I used many available verification strategies, this study is the result of my understanding at this time: one person at one point in time. Although my biases were questioned by my thesis committee and each of the stories was verified by the participants, the conglomerated story is embedded in my biases and interpretation. Perhaps the real test of its value will be what happens for the family and/or community, and me, after it has been given back to them.

Limitations

I went walking with my husky dog and wailed, "In one of my undergraduate classes I designed a perfect experiment. But Squeaky, this study, a real study, has not turned out perfectly!" Squeaky shook his head and snorted as if to tell me, "So talk about what was not quite perfect, and then blow your nose and get over it."

As per Squeaky's advice, I am going to tell you about this study's limitations. One limitation was that I am not Cree. No matter what degree of empathy I possessed, my perspective could never be the same as that of a Cree person. This limitation was mitigated, however, by several factors. First, the project was jointly conceived and designed by me and the community in the spirit of participatory action research. Second, it was research in which the family wished to participate. Third, it seemed clear that this study was cross-cultural. Fourth, I included the stories of the participants so that their voice would be an integral part of the study.

A second limiting factor in the study was that I am of eastern European ethnicity. Historically, it was chiefly people of European origins that created the policies that hurt the Aboriginal people of North America. Today, the people of European origin continue to be the dominant culture in Canada. Although neither the participants nor I could do anything about it, the history of the colonialisation of North America was an issue in the study. HA referred to it in his interview when he said:

> You[12] ran here, running away from your own people, and now you are going to treat me like they treated you? You are no better than they are. Like the ones that came here and started saying, "They are no good." You were treated like that. Do not take it out on me. (HA's story, p. 313).

Another limitation of this study was that it was a case study, a situated response to a particular phenomenon that occurred within one familial, community, political, and historical context. The case study recorded depth, rather than breadth of experience. Because of the depth of experience, the results may be transferable to people in similar circumstances, but they are not generalisable to a larger population.

Although the data was extensive, it remained incomplete in several aspects. First, there were other people who were close to HA and WA who could have provided me with interesting data. During the study, I found out that HA and WA had two foster children that, had they been included in the study, would have surely given an interesting view of the family dynamics. Second, as mentioned previously, eighteen months after I had completed his interviews, HA asked to be re-interviewed. I consulted with Cindy, my thesis advisor, who reminded me of the timelines of the thesis completion and that at some point data collection had to be declared complete or the story would never be told. I had to refuse another interview until after the thesis was complete. Third, one other family member found out that I had been conducting interviews and asked to be a part of the study. Unfortunately, the data had been collected and I could not comply with the request. Fourth, GA's interview has not as yet been translated from Cree to English, with the resulting loss of data. Fifth, the equipment failed several times. I was aghast to learn that the video recording device failed at NRs' interview; I was unable to use that interview in the documentary video that I produced. In another instance of equipment failure, all three recorders failed in my first interview with NA. I asked her if I could interview her twice. Luckily, she agreed. The data, however, was different than she had given me in the initial interview. Because she had thought further about the research question, her second interview included recollections and reflections that were not a part of her first interview.

Another potential difficulty of communication, especially in a multi-cultural context, is misappropriation of voice; i.e., the participants mean one thing and the researcher thought that they meant something else, resulting in the work of the project being based upon a misunderstanding of meaning. To counter this, participants were first sent transcripts of the interviews that they had granted and second copies of the stories that were going to become part of the thesis. They were given several months to offer feedback to me. Any errors or omissions brought to my attention were promptly corrected. Thus stories presented in their entirety helped to ensure proper appropriation of voice.

This study was a learning experience for me. At its onset I did not know how important the history and context would be. This was problematic for two reasons. First, although it fell within ethical guidelines, the inclusion of the names of the communities and ancestors compromised the participants' anonymity and I therefore had to clarify with them that I could name their communities and ancestors in the thesis. Data analysis could have been more seamless if assigning names to the participants had not been so difficult. The Information Sheet included the statement, "You will instruct me whether or not you wish your name, face, or voice be attached to the information that you give me." I received no such instruction from any participant, but when I tried to assign a pseudonym to HA, he rejected it. After several attempts, pseudonyms as initials were assigned to the participants. Second, it would have saved Cindy, Jude, Derek, the Chair of the AFHE REB, the participants, and me time and effort if I had anticipated the importance of context in this research and had discussed it fully with the participants from the onset of the study rather than after the data collection and analysis had begun.

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[1] See http://www.ncehr-cnerh.org/English/code_2/

[2] See:
http://www.afhe.ualberta.ca/Research/Ethics%20Review/Index.asp?page=Instructions

[3] See http://www.acuns.ca/EthicsEnglishmarch2003.pdf

[4] NA's story, p. 482

[5] 'Manito' is another word for Creator or God.

[6] The Department of Northern Saskatchewan was in existence from 1972 until 1983.

[7] HA, line 364, interview 1

[8] Interview with BA & SA , line 5

[9] More about the significance of the offering and accepting of tobacco is reviewed in the section, *Giving tobacco and gifts.*

[10] Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001, p. 58.

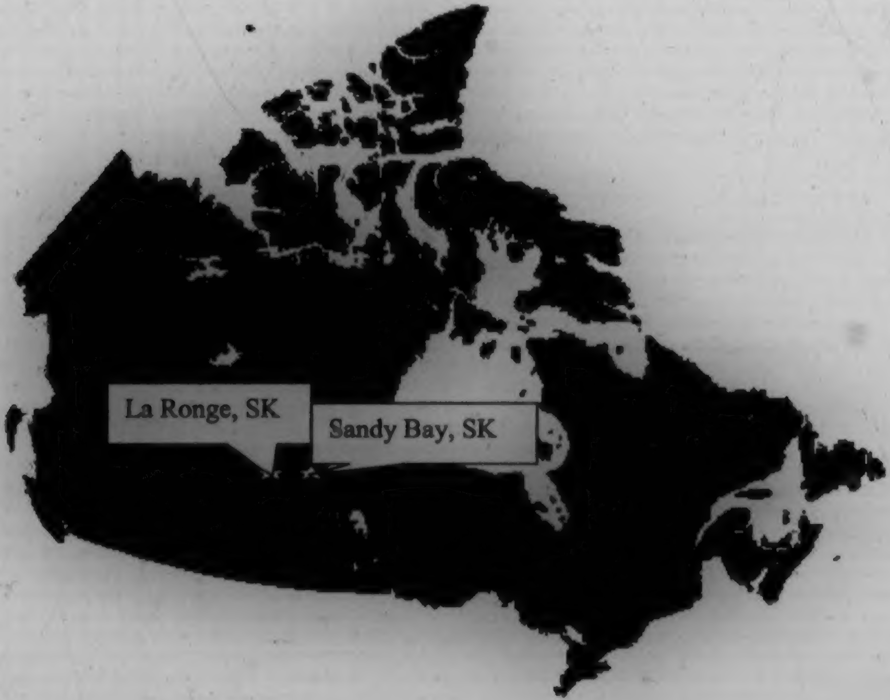
[11] The dance of violence is a term used by those who believe that both people in an intimate dyad contribute to domestic violence. Mills (2003) asserted that the feminist view stated that women who batter always do so to defend themselves, but in fact women participate to one degree or another in a dynamic of abuse, and hence are stronger and more resilient than we may think (p.9).

[12] HA is referring to people and their descendents who immigrated to Canada from abroad.

Chapter 5: Where we lived

Brilliant sunshine magnified the ice crystals nestled in the northern pine, birch, tamarack, and willow as I drove north of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan on Highway 106 to Junction 135. My destination? Sandy Bay, a community of one thousand Woodland Cree First Nations, Métis, and non-Aboriginal people, situated at the northeast end of Highway 135, a 120 kilometre gravel highway that climbs and falls, twists and bends through the forest and around the rocks, lakes, rivers, and streams that make up the north Saskatchewan landscape. The map below shows the location of Sandy Bay and a neighbouring community of La Ronge.

Figure 2: Locations of La Ronge and Sandy Bay, SK



As I drove, I thought about what I knew of the history of Sandy Bay. The Woodland Cree people, also called Rock Cree, Rocky, Stony, Missinippi, Wood, or Woods Cree because they spoke Cree with a *th* dialect,[13] had lived in the region since before 1200 A.D.[14] They lived a nomadic lifestyle in the northern forest. Their livelihood was one of hunting and gathering. They gathered plants and berries, hunted, fished, and trapped. They followed their large game animal, the moose. Their highways consisted of the rivers, streams, and lakes of the north.

Valuable resources in the boreal forest

The Woodland Cree people's way of life changed with the coming of the European explorers. Siggins explained, "In 1668, Pierre-Esprit Radisson and Médard Chouart, Sieur Des Grosielliers, forest runners or *coureurs de bois* from New France, defected to the English taking with them their knowledge of canoe routes, the intricacies of trading furs, and the peculiarities of the Indian nations. For the first time in history, the furs of the Canadian boreal forest could be accessed by a demanding European market. When a ship returned to Britain with her hold full of valuable furs, Prince Rupert realised that he had a gold mine on his hands. On May 2, 1670, King Charles II granted a Royal Charter which gave exclusive trading rights to Hudson Bay and its drainage basin, an incredibly huge area which became known as Rupert's Land. The Royal Charter resulted in the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC)."[15] The HBC erected trading posts, depots for gathering furs. The European fur market was very strong, and the HBC expanded quickly across the boreal forest. The Woodland Cree began trapping and selling pelts for European goods that helped to ease their way of life. Between 1799 and 1801, the early fur traders occupied a trading post at Sturgeon House, located near the current site of Sandy Bay.[16]

Furs were not the only valuable resource in the boreal forest that was valued by the Europeans. Siggins wrote, "In 1910, David Collins, a Cree working his trap line, discovered the zinc and copper ore body that would become the foundation of the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company (HBM&S)[17] in Flin Flon, Manitoba. Collins revealed his discovery to Thomas Creighton, a white man, who along with three other partners registered the claim for themselves in 1915. They promised Collins that he would be paid if they found anything and then, *as a kind gesture,* once gave him some tea, ten pounds of flour, some lard, sugar, and a couple of biscuits. The first shipment of purified ore was dispatched in 1928. Few First Nations people were involved in either the construction of the mine or its operation. In 1973, of the 2,800 employees, sixteen were Native."[18]

Traditional multi-family communities

We might picture a trapper's cabin to be solitary and isolated, but traditional Woodland Cree people lived not in solitude and isolation, but in multi-family communities. Brightman (1990) wrote, "Around 1900, the First Nations people were able to establish log-cabin hamlets in their hunting territories for successive winters because they could preserve meat and purchase some food" (p. 111). HA confirmed this living arrangement, "The communities were made up of four to six log cabins, about one hundred metres away from each other."[19]

Within the traditional communities, relationships were interacting, reciprocal, and involved face-to-face dealings with others. The communities emphasised mutual support and the achievement of common goals.[20] An Elder described the traditional community of his youth. "Everyone liked to work in the same place, not be too far from the others. Everyone was in the bush: fishing or trapping. Everyone would live in the same camp, even though each family had a different cabin. The family was so close."[21]

BA remembered, "The old people in those communities would be talking. Their relationship was very strong and very protective toward one another. Wherever people went, they had relatives and very strong relationships with everyone. There were always hugs, kisses, and gifts. The parents would vie for the privilege of feeding the children. Everyone was always welcome anywhere they went."[22]

Governance in traditional communities

The traditional Woodland Cree society was egalitarian. Based on sharing, generosity, and hospitality, the Woodland Cree governed themselves with a conscience-enforced moral standard that was transmitted through the elders' story-telling. NR said, "The elders in the community told their daughters what was good and what was no good for them. They were strong. That is how everyone saw the elders. Children would spend a lot of time with elders, listening to their stories when they were growing up."[23] Relationships in the traditional communities were closely knit. The communities had common goals, and sense of control over their environment. People who committed acts that were against traditional ways were avoided and talked about by the rest of the community. BA remembered, "Up until the early 1950s, the community looked down on anybody that had alcohol or drank it. It was not right."[24] He continued, "I remember my dad coming back to the trap line with everything: all our gifts, turkey, and what not for Christmas. Then he came back with some kind of beer, wine, and whiskey. The community looked down upon us because my father had alcohol. In other places where other families had alcohol, the community talked about them."[25]

NR continued, "No one was allowed to get drunk. You would get into really deep trouble if you started drinking young. The mothers were really careful with their daughters. They would not let them go running around. In the old days, people had their marriages arranged for them. Later, people went out and found their own partner but the moms still kept a strong hold of their daughters and the dads taught their sons to respect women. If it was not for women, there would be no children. Women carry the children; it is sacred. 'You have to respect the woman. She is raising your kids. The man's job is to go out there and look after your family.' Those were some of the things the elders used to say."[26]

On the trap line, everybody contributed to sustaining the family. The children were taught through storytelling and by example to do their part. BA talked about fishing, trapping, and hunting at an early age. "Most of our food we got from the environment. Then as we got older, as HA got older, he helped my father to support the family."[27]

Untimely death in the traditional community

I was told of incidences of violence and untimely death in this society. In one story, I was told how HA's grandmother and her baby were murdered by her husband, HA's step-grandfather. HA's mother witnessed the murder, and saw the man leave. She had to dress the murdered bodies of her mother and sibling and keep them for two weeks until the others came back from a hunting trip and the burials could be performed. As soon as that was done, they went in pursuit of the murderer.[28]

I was told two other stories about the death of that woman. LA said, "My grandmother died when my mother was twelve years old. I heard two stories about that death. I heard that my grandmother was very abused by the guy that she had married; in fact, he beat her to death. When my mom was drunk, she would say, 'He was a bastard. He killed my mom and my baby brother.' I believed my mother. Then somebody else told me another story of how my grandmother died. 'No, that was not the way it was. He really treated her good! The way that she died was that she got cold. She and her husband were visiting from one village to the other. She was riding in the sleigh in the winter, and then she got a chill. The chill killed her because she was pregnant.'"[29]

A booze binge and the violence to accompany it

As colonialism encroached upon the Aboriginal people, traditional values began to be supplanted with alcohol abuse. [illegible]A recalled, "Every once in a while my dad and HA would go on a booze binge and sometimes I would tag along."[30] NA told her mother's stories describing her grandfather's drunken violence. "When he was drunk," she said, "my grandpa would chase my granny with axes or picks, things like that. He would go out after her in the bush, and there would be nobody there to help her. She was busy protecting her children. One time she hid her children under a boat and then stole back into the house to get food to feed the children with the hope that he would be passed out. My mother told me that this kind of violence went on for many years."[31]

HA, four years younger than NA's mother, recalled his childhood differently. He said, "My parents lived on the land when I was small. When they used to bring alcohol to the bush, they would drink that one night and everything else would get put in the cupboard for a year until somebody else came along. They would not drink it. I never saw my dad hitting my mom. They would get into a real shouting match, but that was basically it. When she out-hollered at him, then he would leave because he did not want to holler any more. He gave up. He let her cool off, and then he came back. That was part of being married. You had disagreements and they could become very forceful."[32]

LA also recalled violence when he was young. "When they got into the booze, my dad would beat on my mom. I remember this one time, we were living in this log cabin, and I remember that they had partied. Things were fine for the first few hours. Then when the booze kicked in, my dad went somewhere. Toward evening, my mom came home with her friend. They had hid the malt[33] up in the attic; they called it home brew. They wanted me to go up there and retrieve that booze but I was scared because if my dad came back, I would be in trouble. I was up there bringing the booze down when my dad walked in. I was caught up there, dangling there, and I would not let go. My dad was telling me, 'Let go!'

"I said, 'No, I am not going to come down because you are going to hurt me!'

"He said, 'No, no, I will not hurt you.'

"I do not know how long I stayed up there before finally I came down. They drank and I went to sleep. All of a sudden in the middle of the night, I woke up. My sisters were screaming.

"I asked, 'What is going on?' We snuck out of the house, and my mom managed to get away from my dad so we hid in this cherry bush not far from the house. It was thick in that bush. We were all huddled there. My dad was tearing up the house and he was throwing everything out. Everything. The sun came up and he passed out so we came out. Everything that had been in the house was scattered on the front lawn."[34]

Governance by the Priest, Indian Agent, and Police

As soon as priests, HBC trading post managers, and Indian agents[35] moved into Aboriginal territory, they became both the lawmakers and law enforcers. They held unquestionable authority and power. HA reflected on the power of the priest and Indian agent, "The priest had more power than anybody did. Those days, if the priest said you did something bad, then you would go to jail. The Indian agent would go to the priest for help. If someone had an argument with the Indian agent, then the Indian agent told the priest, 'I want this guy in jail for a month.' They would take him to jail. There was no court; there was no judge, just the Indian agent's word. He was the manager and the law. He could charge you and put you in jail."[36] The Aboriginal people learned not to question the authority of the priest or Indian agent. Anyone who might have had an inclination to question their authority was quickly quieted. BA remembered, "I always questioned, even with the church I questioned, and my mother would get mad at me. I just wanted to know some things. 'Why is this? Explain it to me, I want to know.' But it did not work; now I know. But at that time, I wanted to know; I wanted to learn."[37]

HA recollected learning that it was acceptable to hurt a spouse because of the lack of intervention by the police. He said, "People were fighting all the time and they did not have to be drunk to fight. They just fought. I saw it and that is how I understood it. That is how I was sucked in. From what I could see, nobody got in trouble. We had police in the community. Even if they were called, they did not really do anything. They would stop the fight, but hardly anybody ever got charged. They were charged for being drunk and fighting. You could beat your wife and get nothing for it. It was all right to touch your wife if she did not listen. The woman was less. The law was the manager, the boss. He could charge you and put you in jail. But how come he did not charge you? He seemed to think it was all right. I got a mixed message."[38]

The Island Falls Dam and Power Plant

Electrical power would help to make the mining of the ore at the HBM&S mine more efficient. In 1927, engineers discovered that the rapids at Twin Island Falls, twenty-two and one-half kilometres west of Flin Flon, could be transformed into a hydro-electric dam. Plans to build the Island Falls Dam and Power Plant at Twin Falls were immediately undertaken. [39] Siggins noted, "The first notice proposing the dam appeared in the Regina Leader on June 20, 1928, three months before the licence was issued. Construction at Island Falls was begun in 1928."[40]

The Island Falls Dam and Power Plant was built by the Churchill River Power Company between 1928 and 1930 to provide electricity for the HBM&S mine and mill in Flin Flon. Quiring (2004) wrote that there were two very different and conflicting stories that described the process of establishing the dam and power plant. In one version, the establishment of the dam was fair; it occurred after public hearings that took place in 1928. In another version, the Aboriginal oral history version, the fairness of the hearings was denied. Quiring wrote, "The official version of the planning of the Island Falls dam says public hearings took place in 1928. The Saskatchewan government issued a fifty-year licence and the Churchill Power Company, a subsidiary of the HBM&S, built the dam which began operating in 1930. Virtually no one had settled in the Island Falls area prior to construction of the dam. One application to the province's Water Branch listed the population numbers in the area to be 'none.'[41] Chief Cornelius Ballantyne [sic] (Chief Cornelius Whitebear)[42] tried to establish a reserve in the area but he was unsuccessful and interest in his project faded after he died. With construction of the dam, Indians came seeking jobs, moving from the Pelican Narrows area to the new village of Sandy Bay near the dam site." [43]

Quiring continued, "Aboriginal oral history claims that establishment of the reserve went ahead before the mining firm wanted to build the dam. Then, when HBM&S spotted the prime Island Falls hydro site, Ottawa, which controlled crown land until 1930, took the reserve from the Indians. The government then claimed that the reserve never existed there. Instead, it claimed that the reserve was located at Sturgeon Weir Indian Reserve, over a hundred miles to the southeast."[44]

HA recounted his knowledge of the same story, "My Grandfather Cornelius Whitebear wanted a reserve in Sandy Bay for the people here: the rest of his family, and their children, and their children, and their children. That is what he wanted, so he more or less pegged out a reserve but nobody really knows where it is because it was never mapped out. It is in the history books that he wanted a reserve. I have a letter that he wrote to Ottawa, asking them to come and survey the reserve land. They wrote back to him, and said, 'Yes. When we come to survey Pelican Narrows and Pukatawagan, we will survey your reserve.' But they did not survey Sandy Bay because the federal government already had an agreement in place with HBM&S. The reserve that my grandfather wanted in Sandy Bay got bypassed."[45]

The Island Falls dam was built in the traditional fur-trapping and hunting territory of Woodland Cree families and where Rutherford (2006) recorded that, in years past, there had been a trading post.[46] Siggins noted that during construction of the dam in 1929-30, when many labourers were needed, the First Nations people who wished to work there could do so only if they gave up their treaty rights[47]. Those who gave up their treaty rights and worked at the dam were paid at first in second-rate, then later, in second-hand groceries. Siggins quoted Goulet who recorded an employee's memories, "Baloney, mainly baloney. Sometimes bacon. That is how we were paid."[48] "Later," Siggins said, "some of the groceries that paid the Aboriginal people's labour were second-hand. 'Arthur Jan operated a concession stand at the construction site where he suggested a money-saving scheme that was implemented by HBM&S: pay the Aboriginal people with the meat left over from the white workers' sandwiches.'"[49] Once the dam was completed, acres of the best fur-trapping and hunting land were flooded. At the same time, the power plant provided very little employment for Aboriginal people. In his story, BA noted that the maintenance of the plant was left mostly to non-Natives.[50] The Woodland Cree people's land of abundance was irrevocably changed.

In 1967, Island Falls became automated. Very few employees were needed daily to keep it running. The company village of Island Falls shut down. Fewer people from Sandy Bay were employed at the dam. There were many positive effects of the automation of the dam for Sandy Bay, however. First, when the people of the Village of Island Falls left, they no longer produced the sewage that had been polluting the Sandy Bay water supply (BA's story, pp. 424-427). The water that the people of Sandy Bay were drinking became cleaner. Second, although there were fewer jobs to be had at the Island Falls dam, many people in Sandy Bay were employed for a short time in dismantling the Island Falls homes. Today, all that remains at the site of the village of Island Falls are some foundations where the houses once stood. Third, when the village of Island Falls closed, the people in the community of Sandy Bay did not have to face the racism that was the underlying reason of the disparity of services. Many people in the area continued to hold racist attitudes, but the people in the community of Sandy Bay no longer had to face those attitudes on a daily basis.

Hunger cramps

The area where HA's parents trapped, hunted, and fished had sustained a plentiful livelihood for them but sometimes the fish and animals could not be caught. This was especially true after the building of the Island Falls dam in 1928 and a storage dam on the Reindeer River in 1943 resulting in the flooding of prime trapping, hunting, fishing, and gathering grounds. Quiring documented the destruction. "In 1942-43, the Churchill River Power Company built a storage dam on the Reindeer River to help stabilize the water supply for Island Falls. This second dam raised the level of Reindeer Lake by up to ten feet and caused the near disappearance of muskrat, beaver, and mink; destruction of spawning grounds; reduced fish harvests; and other difficulties. Local people received no compensation."[51] GA corroborated Quiring's words in her recollection of the changes that she had seen in the area during her lifetime. "Where there was once an abundant supply of sturgeon, so many that you could see the sturgeon swimming in the water; suddenly there were few or none."[52] Siggins confirmed the story with Angus Bear's recollection of the events. "The mud sturgeon as a species was all but wiped out; nine houses including all equipment were destroyed; gardens disappeared, boats were damaged by floating logs, and birds chose a different migration path."[53]

The result of the dam construction and flooding of prime land was that there were times when even the best hunters and fishers could catch nothing. Hunger became increasingly prevalent. BA recalled experiencing stomach cramps from hunger. "There were times when we went through hunger. A couple of times when I was young, probably about ten years old, I can remember thinking very clearly, 'I wonder if I am going to live tomorrow.' I was having stomach cramps from no food. At that time there was no welfare and my father could not get any animals for pelts. They could not catch fish. I remember my dad was going to go and try to get some food and my mother sent my two older brothers to go where they had set nets in the fall to go and dig up the guts so she could make something out of it. I remember that I was so hungry for whatever she made out of that, some kind of soup."[54]

Siggins wrote, "The residents of Sandy Bay became very bitter. Their bitterness stemmed not as much from the discrimination, though, as from their inability to sustain themselves because their best fur-trapping and hunting land had been flooded after the completion of the dam and the flooding had been carried out without permission from the Aboriginal people. Not one Aboriginal person knew that they were going to flood the land."[55] Yet another reason for the bitterness was the contrast between the lifestyles in the adjacent communities of Island Falls and Sandy Bay. Island Falls was a company town of white people that was affluent, law-abiding, and peaceful. In contrast, Sandy Bay was a community of Aboriginal people that was poor and where alcoholism and violence were common. The difference between the lifestyles in the adjoining communities increased the bitterness among those living in Sandy Bay.

Tuberculosis extracts a toll

The Woodland Cree experienced a less-nomadic life-style that came with the HBC and trapping, staying in one place to work constructing the dams and power plant. They began contracting European disease as the result of contact with non-Aboriginal people and possibly as the result of the more sedentary life-style. Tuberculosis, an infectious agent that may evolve from a soil bacterium, that may take years to develop and without treatment results in a slow and excruciatingly painful death, was introduced to the Woodland Cree.[56] This disease greatly impacted HA's family. "The sanatorium, a care facility on Avenue K in Saskatoon that provided sunshine, bed rest and good food, the key therapies for tuberculosis patients, was home to many members of our community in the 1950s. People stayed there for as little as a few months, and up to thirty years. In our community, more people had the disease than did not have it." WA said that because of his father's illness and hospitalisation, HA took over the job of providing for the family through hunting and fishing. "Their father started being hospitalised for being sick with tuberculosis. HA and his older brother were ten and twelve, so they were of the age that they worked with their dad. When their dad was too sick to work, they took over many of his responsibilities."[57]

Tuberculosis affected not only the health of the family but also its social structure. HA had to take on the role of provider because of his father's illness and hospitalisation. At the same time, fish and game were becoming increasingly scarce because of the flooding of the land. HA developed remarkable bush skills. BA said, "When HA was at the trap line, he knew how to survive. It did not matter what, he could be gone for a month, just matches and a tea pail, and he would survive, no problem, because he knew the environment. He knew how the animals worked, how the animals moved and he knew where to get them."[58]

HA was given the gift of being able to communicate with the animals, which in times past, might have gained him the position of okimāw, i.e., chief or headman.[59] HA recalled a specific incident which illustrated this remarkable gift, his ability to talk to the animals. "I went hunting one winter. We had no meat; I needed to get something. I kept seeing caribou in the distance, too far away to shoot. I followed them all day, until at the end of the day, nearing dusk, I reached a point fairly close to home, near where I had started out that morning. I decided to go home; I was not going to get anything that day. As I was walking home, I sensed a presence behind me, like someone or something watching me. I sat down, and covered myself with snow to my waist. The caribou were following me. I sat very still, waiting, until they got close enough so that I could see their eyes. I shot the caribou, dressed them, and brought them home. It was a gift that I was given, a gift in the cultural way with caribou, with lynx, and with beaver. I was careful never to abuse the gift. I killed only what was needed and made sure that all parts of the animal was used."[60]

FD told about HA bringing home a lynx every year. "One thing I remember is when he first sobered up, they had no food. But he was trapping, and he got a lynx. She cut it up and marinated it, and that was what they had to eat that day. Every year after that, before his AA birthday, he caught a lynx."[61]

Decision to move

Government policy was encroaching more and more upon the traditional way of life. A government policy of the mid 1800s, assimilation,[62] continued to have a strong influence on government actions. For the Aboriginal people, assimilation meant indoctrinating their children to believe that the Aboriginal person should think, talk, and act as those of the dominant, European-based culture of the nation and that it was wrong to worship in the traditional way, that all other vestiges of the culture should be given up.

Another government policy was compulsory education for children aged sixteen and younger. In practise, that meant that all Canadian children were obligated to receive a formal education. In southern and central Saskatchewan, schools were built in locations such that they were central to the families living there. When there were many small farms, schools consisted of one room schoolhouses, with one teacher responsible for teaching Grades one to eight. Youth wanting more education could either complete their education by correspondence or by moving into areas of larger population where they would room and board while they attended school. In northern Saskatchewan, the population was too sparse to justify even one-room school houses. Either the parents or the children had to leave their homes so that the children could attend a school where a school was erected. If the parents left their homes and livelihoods, their families stayed intact but the families had to endure leaving their homes and their way of life. If the children left their homes, the family's livelihood was kept intact but the families had to endure separation. Either decision smashed the social structure of the traditional way of life.

HA told the story of his family's decision to leave the trapline and to move into Sandy Bay. He said, "A government man visited my parents two times. The first time he came, the man made my parents an offer. If they left the trapline and moved into town where their children could go to school, then they would get a house and enough money to live on. For free. My mom and dad told the man that they would think about what he was offering, and then make a decision. When the man left, we all met together to talk this over and to decide. We could not understand why they would pay us to stay home because they were going to give us a house and enough money to live on without having to work for it. It did not make sense, to be paid to stay home. We thought, no, we were going to stay where we were. We did not want to be paid to stay home."

HA continued, "Then the man came again. We told him that we were not going to move into town. Then he told us that the children had to go to school, one way or another. If we decided to stay out at the trapline, then the kids would have to go to residential school. If we did not put the children in residential school, then they would come and take them from my parents and put them in school. But we did not have to have the kids taken away; we could move into town instead, get a free house and money to live on. The kids could live at home and go to school. It was not an easy choice. Either we had to leave the trapline and the camp or the government would come and take the kids."[63] One choice was to choose the traditional lifestyle over their family while the other choice was to choose their family over the traditional lifestyle.

The Woodland Cree culture was based upon reciprocity and collectivism. The children were part of the collective whole and because of that it was unthinkable to allow them to go to a residential school. The residential school idea was even more repugnant because both parents had spent time in residential school. HA's mother had spent a long time in Sturgeon Landing Residential School and his father a shorter time. HA says, "My mother grew up in Sturgeon Landing, a Residential School. For her, nothing a Priest can do and nothing the brothers can do, nothing the sisters can do is wrong although she tells me as another story that she got the tar beaten out of her by those servants of God. She did not eat good food. They would buy fish from the local fishermen and they would boil them and boil them and boil them, just like you boil them for dogs. It ended up being one big mush with carrots, turnip, and potatoes. Many students could not eat that because the fish is good if it is boiled the right way. But when you mush it, you do not want to eat anything like that. She used to tell me that if you did not eat it, you would not eat at all. A lot of the kids that could not eat that stuff would be gone. My mother tells me today that a lot of those kids were her peers. She would ask, 'Where did that one go?'

They would answer, 'Oh, they had to go home.' Yet that kid had died and a lot of times, it was malnutrition."[64]

Because of their knowledge of the reality of life at a residential school, and because they loved their children, HA's parents knew that their choice was obvious. They decided to leave their traditional lifestyle, move into town, get paid to stay home, and adjust into a whole new way of life where they had no control over their environment. In view of their culture and their past experience, they did not make a choice in leaving the land; they were forced into the decision.

Sandy Bay

They moved into Sandy Bay, a community that consisted of Aboriginal people living in poverty. Alcoholism and violence were prevalent. Some of the Aboriginal people of Sandy Bay were employed at the Island Falls dam, while many were on welfare.

Welfare added to the degradation of the Aboriginal people. For the first time in their history, the livelihood of the Aboriginal people consisted of them having to rely on a hand-out for their subsistence, a government cheque. In addition to the degradation of having to accept a hand-out in order to live, they were idle. An eternity of time stretched in front of them. People who had worked hard in all their waking hours were suddenly idle. Whereas in the bush, 'It was always work, work, work, all the time,'[65] now the Aboriginal people had leisure time and no facilities for leisure activities. The Aboriginal people lost their purpose, their pride, and their hope. The houses that they were given to live in were shacks and the money provided to them, if carefully managed, provided only the basics. An Elder said, "We got only two hundred and ten dollars a month to feed five children and lights and rent had to come from that. Things were cheaper then; it cost ninety dollars for a month for rent and thirty dollars for heat, but still, that was not much."[66]

There was never any money for anything other than basic shelter, food, and clothing. In a culture where gift giving is central to reciprocity, there was no extra money for any Christmas or birthday gifts. An Elder vividly described the effect of the new way of life on women. "I used to notice a lot of anger, especially at Christmas. When Christmas time came, no one could buy anything. Up north the women used to make moose hides, sit down and do bead work, and give everybody mitts or moccasins with fancy beadwork on it. Those were the Christmas presents. In Sandy Bay, alcohol took over everybody's life."[67] HA recalled his mother's devastation, "That new way of life took a lot out of my mother."[68]

The communities of Island Falls and Sandy Bay were segregated by location, by race, and by the way the people in each place were treated. HA described the treatment of the Aboriginal employees of Island Falls. He said, "My father did not agree with the way things worked at Island Falls. People who were working there were segregated. Some treated him very badly. People from Sandy Bay that worked there walked or boated across the bay to go to work. In the wintertime, the same people that you worked for from eight o'clock till five o'clock, if there was a snowstorm last night, you would have to go and shovel their driveways so they could go to work with you. Why could they not shovel out their driveway themselves? But they were superior. That was the way it was set up. They were better so you had to kiss their feet. You had to brush their shoes, so they did not bring snow into the house. My dad worked there on and off. He always had a good job when he worked there. But he never agreed with the system and he would end up leaving. He got along with all the people that worked there, and the superintendent loved him, but he just could not make himself stay because of the way things were happening there. The other people that worked there from my community brushed the snow off these guys, and treated them like gods because of the job or because they were superior. You had to do exactly what they said. They knew best; we knew nothing. We lacked the confidence in our ability to be able to do more for ourselves. But if Island Falls were working today, it would never be like that."[69]

The Catholic Church

HA recalled, "Sandy Bay was a Catholic-dominated community. The bell rang, and people would go to church. They would take their kids with them. They prayed together. After church, people would visit. The men would sit down for sometimes two hours outside the church, smoking their pipes and sharing stories of what they were going to do and who was going to go with who and who was going to partner with who on a moose hunting trip. Some were going to go sturgeon fishing, and who was going to partner with them. The women would wander off home. There would be a fire in the stove, and there would be a pot of stew and bannock and we would all get fed. That was how it was. People shared what they had. They would visit and then at the end of the day, go home. That is how they spent Sunday."[70]

The Catholic Church, whose priest lived in the community, had a strong influence on the entire community. SNA talked about the later years, when the priest was known to rule his parishioners with an iron hand. "One priest really had a strong influence over the community. In some ways, however, when you really talked to him, he could be liberal, but not to his parishioners. In the community, he had the rules and acts, but for outsiders he was more human. He needed to set an example for the people in Sandy Bay."[71]

HA's mother cautioned her children not to question the priest. BA said, "I questioned our old priest. My mother always said, 'You never question the priest,' but I questioned different things and I got heck from the priest. The priest was very controlling with my parents, especially my mother. My dad was supposed to be head of the household, but my mother actually was. When this priest left, another one came in either 1951 or 1952, and took control of the whole community. Priests and ministers were very controlling to the people because they were the *Father*. Even if the priests were violent and people knew that violence or even sexual abuse was happening, it was okay because he was a worker of God."[72]

FD told the story of the youth in the community questioning the priest. He said, "The Catholic priest controlled the community. Traditionally, people in Sandy Bay use medicine, healing herbs. When the priest came, he made them pull up the herbs that they used for their medicines and destroy them because they were the devil's work. That had a strong impact on a community because the people had been doing that for centuries. After he retired and left the community, they found a copy of a letter that he had sent to the Archbishop calling the people of Sandy Bay *animals*. There for a while he ruled the roost, and that has got to have an impact on the community."[73]

The priest calling his parishioners *animals* merited some investigation. Was it racism, or ~~had~~ he based this statement on a specific incident? I queried a nun to see if she might know what had happened. She told me that she had heard nothing of a letter to the Archbishop. She had, however, heard about something that had happened in Sandy Bay. She said, "I heard about an incident with the Sandy Bay priest and some people in the community. The priest had a truck and some people wanted to borrow it from him. He refused. So the people tied him to a tree, and set the tree on fire. Maybe the priest was writing to the Archbishop about that."[74]

Access to Sandy Bay

Sandy Bay had no year-round access road until 1976. BA and SA both talked about the lack of an access road into Sandy Bay in the early 1970s, while NR said that the completion of the access road was not necessarily positive for the health of the Sandy Bay community. SA said, "The very first time I went to Sandy Bay, we flew in and that was a traumatic experience in itself. I would never have been in a plane, taking off in a floatplane, and then landing on the water."[75] BA said, "In 1973, the road was up to my brother's camp about fifteen kilometres away from Sandy Bay because when I came back from my fieldwork in Batoche, I parked there, right on the hill where my brother's camp is; my car was facing towards Sandy Bay. It was starting to rain, and the car was starting to sink. I could not drive any further, so this other guy and I left the car there and we walked into Sandy Bay."[76] NR reflected, "In the winter time, they hauled booze in to Sandy Bay on the winter road. But it was still just partying; there still was not that much violence. In the summer, they used planes to haul freight. Even when the road was built all the way to Sandy Bay, it was still hard to travel because the road was not really that good and there were not that many vehicles then. Now the highway is busy all the time. That is how all the booze and drugs are coming to the north."[77]

Island Falls, Shangri-La of the North & Sandy Bay, Country Cousin

The community of Island Falls, which no longer exists, was built to house the families of the non-Aboriginal people working at the Island Falls Dam and Power Plant. It was a dream village, dubbed the *Shangri-La of the*

Far North.[78] This village of thirty-two families was a model post-war community, more modern than any other town in the entire province. The houses were covered with creeper vines and all supplied with electric heat and light as well as hot and cold water.[79] An active Community Association built sidewalks and a large community recreation hall complete with moving-picture theatre, dance floor, bowling alley, curling rink; cold storage lockers, tennis courts, and a five-hole golf course. Women could not have their own auxiliary to the association, however. Mr. Davis, Churchill Power Plant supervisor ruled, 'My experience has been that too often trouble results from elections women hold to elect officers of their group. It immediately sets up factions and that is something we do not want.'[80] Official statements note that Island Falls was built to house the *company people*. In reality, Island Falls housed the *non-Aboriginal* company people even though nowhere does it say that *company people* completely excluded Aboriginal people.

The Aboriginal people who were employed at the dam and power plant at Island Falls were housed in Sandy Bay. A *country cousin* to Island Falls, located across the bay from Island Falls, Sandy Bay had no electricity and no recreational facilities. Aboriginal people were needed to help build the Island Falls dam, but they were not allowed to live in the company town of Island Falls, nor were they allowed to use their recreational facilities. Why? The Island Falls Dam and Power Plant needed continuity of employment. Continuity of employment meant that living accommodations had to entice families to the remote area. To entice families to move to a northern community with access by plane and boat only was difficult enough. But to entice families to an isolated community where children would intermingle with Native children, and perhaps even become friendly with them was untenable. If no families would move there, then the only people that would be available to manage and engineer the project would be young unmarried men, who would come only for a while. There would be no continuity of employment, and the project would suffer.

Aboriginal people were needed to help build the dam, and the solution was obvious. The Aboriginal people had to have their own separate community. The Cree were given a bit of lumber, usually scrap wood from the construction of the Island Falls dam with the stipulation that they would use the lumber to build themselves dwellings across the bay from the community of Island Falls. The Cree built their homes there, establishing the present day community of Sandy Bay. Sandy Bay would not even exist if it were not for the Island Falls dam.[81] The establishing of Sandy Bay solved a two-fold problem. The Aboriginal people who had been living on their trap lines were able to keep their children at home while their children attended school in Sandy Bay, and the Island Falls dam would have labourers.

The residents of Sandy Bay were not welcome at any of the Island Falls facilities, including their school, their store, and their recreational facilities. Siggins (2005) quoted Nateweyes who recalled, “I remember once in the 1930s, one Christmas the company sent for a movie show for the Christmas party. The kids were so excited. Tom Ballantyne, known as Chalacheech, travelled miles to pick up the package and miles back in a snowstorm. But they would not let him or his kid into the recreation hall to watch the movie.”[82] Siggins described a 1944 survey of northern schools which reported, “Island Falls: The pupils have the convenience of a modern school complete with indirect lighting, bubbler fountains, and hot and cold showers. Sandy Bay: A rough crude log building serves as a schoolhouse. Little equipment is provided except the usual government grant of library books." [83] Then there were the separate grocery stores. "One was for white people and was well-stocked. The other one was for Indians, with just the basics. At their store, the natives were told to place their order at a back window and pick it up later, while the whites were allowed to inspect their roast beef before they bought it."[84]

BA recalled, "The power came in the 1930s to Island Falls. Just a mile away from Island Falls, the community of Sandy Bay housed the Native people. The people in Sandy Bay did not get power until they started talking about the welfare system in 1958. When the welfare system came in, then the power came in."[85] SA described the housing conditions in Sandy Bay in the early 1970s. She said, "The very first time I went to Sandy Bay, we flew in and that was a traumatic experience in itself. There was no running water, and there were no phones. A lot of places did not have electricity. The first place we stayed had one bulb, as in one light socket. Then we got kicked out of there, and moved to another place. It was a small little house, with a wood stove and two electrical plugs. You could plug in things if you had anything to plug in."[86]

The water that the people in Sandy Bay drank was contaminated. BA continued, "The sewer from Island Falls, what they flushed from their bathrooms, went to the place where Sandy Bay got its drinking water. It was raw sewage; you would see the toilet paper wrapped in those willows all along there, whenever the water went up and then went down, just raw sewage. That is the water that the people of Sandy Bay drank for forty years. The flesh of the fish that were caught there was watery. That kind of treatment has got to affect somebody."[87]

A context of helplessness and hopelessness

The Aboriginal people felt helpless and hopeless. LA remembered, "The house was cold. It was freezing. But we had nowhere else to live."[88] There were no recreational facilities. Their traditional way of life had been given up and they had no other way to provide for themselves. They had little or no control over their environment. They lost hope. Alcohol numbed their pain and violence externalised it.

BA recalled that his parents began abusing alcohol when they moved to Sandy Bay. "When we moved to Sandy Bay, the boozing escalated. It was the late 1950s and early 1960s. There was a lot of drinking and a lot of violence in Sandy Bay; even children were drinking. I remember seeing windows open in the wintertime with little children inside. Then we moved to Flin Flon and I did not want to be part of that anymore. With all that drinking, we would work all summer and winter to accumulate materials like motors and nets. Come fall those materials would get drank up and we would go back to the same."[89]

HA verified his parents' increasing involvement in the drinking lifestyle. He said, "After we moved into Sandy Bay, my parents got this welfare cheque every month. It was basically just existence. No extras, just existence. They lived on that and managed because my mother was a good manager. She made sure that there was food on the table. My dad was not the manager; he left it up to her. After they had lived in Sandy Bay for a while, they got sucked into drinking with everybody else. Everybody had money, so drinking got to be a way of life. There was no road coming in to Sandy Bay at that time. Come Welfare Day[90] in the summer, it cost fifty-two dollars to fly to Flin Flon. In the wintertime, they would plough an ice road to Flin Flon. People working at Island Falls bought old cars and my parents would hire somebody to take them to Flin Flon on Welfare Day. They would buy a little bit of groceries, and the rest went to booze. At that time, they were drinking with a lot of different people and there would be fights. Somebody would fight with his wife and before you know it, they would all be fighting. It was the booze."[91]

WA recalled the community in 1968, "Prior to our marriage, my mother-in-law had told me, on the days that there was money in the community, 'You lock the door, keep the kids in the house at supper time, and you do not let them out and you do not let anybody in because everybody will be drunk, and it is dangerous.' I did not know anything because this was not something that I was used to. She was right. You saw drunks all the time. If you saw adults out on the street, they were drunk. You would see kids out on the street until three or four in the morning; they would be out all night because there was no safe place for them to go. It was that bad."[92]

There were negative consequences to the life of drinking. The family's health was affected not only because of the excessive drinking, but also because they did not care if they were warm when they slept. An Elder said, "I cannot understand why the government lied to our parents. They started drinking heavily when they realized that they had been lied to and that the promises that they had been given were lies."[93]

The excess drinking led to trouble with the law. In one story, "There were seven people, five lining up to appear in court and two others hauling wine to drink in the bush near the courthouse. Eventually, the last person was called in. The judge called him over and he keeled over because he was so drunk. They postponed his case because he could not stand up, then the next week he was fined more. People were a bunch of orang-utans but did not get into any deep trouble."[94]

BA surmised that one of the causes of violence, alcoholism, and drug abuse among Aboriginal people was the loss of hope and the inability to provide for their families. He stated, "When people do not see a future, confidence is shot. Then the choice is either drinking or staying at home and going crazy. I know that every time I do not work and if I am staying at home, I start getting very bitter. I always have to be doing something. I always have to be bringing in some kind of an income. We Native people have always been providers. We worked very hard to make a living from the environment. When we started losing our trapping, fishing, and hunting, naturally the alcohol and the drugs began escalating. There is no hope when you get just enough to get by."[95] He continued, "Anger develops when people are not working and they have to stay home. That is not the only reason, but it is one of the strongest. To get out of the violence, people need something to feel good: that they are working."[96]

The community of Sandy Bay was empowered beginning in 1971 with the advent of a new provincial northern governing body. In the early 1970s, the New Democratic Party (NDP) was elected to govern the Province of Saskatchewan. The NDP set up a northern governing department, the DNS to govern all aspects of the north. The structure of DNS, staffed by northerners and located in the north, provided fiscal control over all spending decisions in the north with community priorities for spending being decided by community boards. This all worked to empower the people of the community of Sandy Bay. They had an alcohol treatment centre built in their community. The more that the people of Sandy Bay became empowered, the more volition they had. Knowing that they could exert control over their own lives empowered the entire community of Sandy Bay. The power that they were given to solve their own community problems was transferred into power to solve their own personal problems.

Summary

In this chapter, I attempted to set the scene for you, the reader, by tracing the historical, social, cultural, political, and economic history and context of Sandy Bay, both as reported in etic (outsider's perspective) and from emic (perspective of the people who lived there) sources. In the next chapter, I will introduce the people who are at the centre of this narrative.

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[13] Siggins, 2005, pp. 13-14

[14] Brightman, 1990, p. 111

[15] Siggins, 2005, pp. 59-60. Today, Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) is the oldest chartered trading company in the world. It was first British, later a Canadian icon, and has recently been purchased by foreign investors.

[16] Rutherford, 2006

[17] Davis and Huffaker, 1935; Olson, 1956

[18] Siggins, 2005, pp. 85-86

[19] Field notes, personal communication with HA, February, 2007

[20] Brown and Hannis, 2008, p. 5

[21] Interview with Anon, lines 233-234, March 31, 2005

[22] BA's story, p. 425

[23] NRs' story, p. 499

[24] BA's story, p. 425

[25] BA's story, p. 426

[26] NRs' story, p. 499

[27] BA's story, p. 411

[28] Field Notes, January 27, 2005

[29] LA's story, p. 447

[30] BA's story, p. 411

[31] Field Notes, January 27, 2005

[32] HA's story, p. 269

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[33] Malt or homebrew are colloquial terms used to describe a home-made fermented alcoholic beverage.

[34] LA's story, pp. 446-449

[35] The Indian agent was a government employee who told Native people what they could do, and when and how they could do it. Dieter (1973) corroborated, "An agent is one who acts in the interests of the other people or parties and is paid for his services. But the one who pays the fiddler is the one who calls the tune. So for who was this man an agent? He was nothing more than an agent for the Crown. The Indian people did not have an agent in any real legal or otherwise practical sense. One could never talk back or sauce an agent of the Crown as he was the supreme ruler of the reserve, and he knew it. To break this rule would mean anywhere from 30 to 90 days hard labour, as he also was a Justice of the Peace or Magistrate and his word was law (pp 1-2).

[36] HA's story, p. 271

[37] BA's story, pp 421-424

[38] HA's story, p. 274

[39] Retrieved on February 28, 2007 from http: www.islandfalls.ca/construction.htm

[40] Siggins, 2005, p. 86

[41] Siggins, 2005, p. 86

[42] According to HA and Siggins, Cornelius Ballantyne, Chief Peter Ballantyne's son, wanted nothing to do with the treaties, and he was never chief. It was Chief Cornelius Whitebear who tried to establish a reserve. (HA's story, p. 266) & Siggins (2005, p. 86)

[43] Quiring, 2004, p 84

[44] Quiring, 2004, p 84

[45] HA's story, p. 264

[46] Rutherford, 2006

[47] In 1927, engineers discovered that the rapids at the Twin Island falls near the Indian-Métis community of Sandy Bay could be transformed into a hydro-electric dam. The Island Falls power plant was built between 1928 and 1930 to provide electricity for the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting mining operation in Flin Flon. It was established within the traditional hunting territory of Woodland Cree families whose homelands had been along the Churchill River. During construction of the dam in 1929-30, the First Nations people

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who wished to work there could do so only if they gave up their treaty rights. Many did and were paid in groceries. Once completed, acres of the best fur-trapping and hunting land was flooded without permission from the Aboriginal people. The water of Sandy Bay became polluted; the mud sturgeon as a species was all but wiped out; houses, gardens, boats disappeared or were damaged, and ducks, geese, bird of all kinds chose a different migration path. The people of Sandy bay are still fighting for compensation (Siggins, 2005, pp. 86-88; Field Notes, January, 2005).

[48] Goulet, K.N., 1986, p. 121 cited in Siggins, 2005, p. 87

[49] Siggins, 2005, p. 87

[50] BA's story, p. 425

[51] Quiring, 2004, p. 84

[52] Field Notes from interview with GA, March 26, 2005

[53] Siggins, 2005, pp. 87-88

[54] BA's story, pp. 417-420

[55] Siggins, 2005, p. 87

[56] Retrieved March 26, 2007 from http://wishart.biology.ualberta.ca/Bacap/cgi/ getSpeciesCard.cgi?accession =NC_002677&ref=index_12.html

[57] WA's story, pp. 318-321

[58] BA's story, p. 424

[59] Siggins, 2005, p. 214

[60] Field notes, January 26, 2005

[61] FD's story, p. 484

[62] "Beginning in the mid-19th century, the government and religious orders reasoned that Aboriginal adults would not willingly give up their so called "heathen" ceremonies, way of life, and languages. Consequently, assimilation would have to take place through the indoctrination of Aboriginal children. To accomplish this, children were often transferred from their homes and communities to residential schools on and off reserves. Photographs were used to portray the schools as positive vehicles for converting tribal people from "savages" to "civilized members of Canadian society." (Retrieved on March 27, 2007 from http://www.wherearethechildren.ca/en/ assimilation.html).

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[63] Field notes, January 25, 2005

[64] HA's story, p. 274

[65] BA's story, p. 410

[66] Interview with Anon, lines 347-348, March 31, 2005

[67] Interview with Anon, lines 355-356, March 31, 2005

[68] HA's story, p. 273

[69] HA's story, pp. 267-270

[70] HA's story, p. 276

[71] SA's story, p. 434

[72] BA's story, p. 418

[73] FD's story, p. 491

[74] Sr. J. Corbeil, personal communication, September 13, 2006

[75] SA's story, p. 436

[76] BA's story, p. 427

[77] NRs' story, p. 499

[78] Honderich, 1946; Retrieved on May 27, 2007 from http://www.islandfalls.ca/ shangrila.htm

[79] Henderson (n.d.). Retrieved on May 17, 2007 from http://www.islandfalls.ca/ hendersonvisit.htm

[80] Honderich, 1946; Retrieved on February 17, 2006 from http://www.islandfalls.ca/ shangrila.htm

[81] Personal communication with H, September 28, 2006

[82] Siggins, 2005, p. 88.

[83] Siggins, 2005, pp. 87-88

[84] Siggins, 2005, pp. 87-88

[85] BA's story, p. 423

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[86] SA's story, p. 436

[87] BA's story, p. 423

[88] Field Notes, July 8, 2005

[89] BA's story, p. 410

[90] The welfare (or Social Assistance) of today is an income program of last resort in Canada. It is a government service that provides money to individuals and families whose resources are inadequate to meet their needs and who have exhausted other avenues of support (Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.ncwcnbes.net/ htmdocument/ reportwelinc99/chap2_e.htm). In the 1960s, people who had lost their livelihood, such as those who had to move from remote locations to places where there were schools, were given welfare to sustain them. The welfare cheque came by mail during the last week of the month in the 1960s. The community of Sandy Bay received mail delivery once per week. Welfare Day in Sandy Bay was the day during the last week of every month when all welfare recipients received their mail and their social assistance cheques. Today, the largest government cheque for low-income families is the Child Tax Benefit. This cheque is either mailed or deposited directly into a bank account at the beginning of the day (midnight) of the 20th of each month. Mail service to Sandy Bay occurs on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The Child Tax Credit cheque today arrives in the mail on the mail delivery day closest to the 20th (Field Notes, February 2007).

[91] HA's story, pp. 274-277

[92] WA's story, p. 325

[93] Interview with Anon, lines 336-337, March 31, 2005

[94] Interview with Anon, lines 191-192, March 31, 2005

[95] BA's story, p. 416

[96] BA's story, p. 423

Chapter 6: What we were like

Introducing HA

HA was born Woodland Cree on a winter day near Reindeer Lake in north-eastern Saskatchewan. Siggins recorded that "Rock, Rocky, Stony, Missinippi Cree, now called Woodland or Woods Cree were those that spoke Cree with a *th* dialect. They stayed in the northern forest, gathered plants and berries, and hunted large game animals such as the moose. The Saskatchewan Rock Cree bands are Lac La Ronge, Lac Wollaston, Sandy Narrows, Sandy Bay, Sturgeon Landing, Island Falls, Pelican Narrows, Southend, and Deschambault Lake. The Manitoba Rock or Woodland Cree bands are Pukatawagan, Nelson House, Brochet, South Indian Lake, Hughes Lake, Granville Lake, Southern Indian Lake, and Churchill."[97] There were many powerful people in HA's family history. Among his ancestors were two chiefs, two shamans, a man who was one of very few Aboriginal people to renounce his treaty status at that time, and a man with extraordinary abilities to escape from being jailed.

HA was raised in the traditional way of life: hunting, fishing, gathering, and trapping. The family worked hard winter and summer to sustain themselves and their children in the same manner as their ancestors had lived. He was forced, as a youth, to move into Sandy Bay where he joined the wage economy and learned the English language. He drank on days off to belong to the group, and then got sucked farther into the mire of alcoholism. Violence accompanied the alcoholism. He married in his twenties, had children, and began moving his primary residence, always keeping strong ties with his home community of Sandy Bay. He began sobering up in his mid thirties, becoming completely abstinent from alcohol at age forty. The violence toward WA stopped shortly after his sobriety, coinciding with having to face legal consequences for it. He realised that he had oratory skills, and joined politics, serving as Mayor of Sandy Bay and Band Councillor, as well as a number of other political positions of trust. In 1993, after a heart attack, he remembered being sexually abused by a priest as a child. His terrorism to WA stopped after the memory surfaced. He retired in Sandy Bay where he continues to be involved with politics.

HA: His ancestors

Peter Ballantyne was elected to be the first chief of the Peter Ballantyne First Nation, and as was customary, the band was named after its first chief. HA told the stories that he was told by elderly people who remembered his paternal great grandfather, Peter. HA said, "This is the history. In 1911, Peter Ballantyne and other people broke away from the James Robert Band in La Ronge and formed the Peter Ballantyne Band. Four or five of those families that joined his band had their trap lines in Manitoba. They decided that they were going to go down river[98] and pick out a spot for a reserve near their trap lines. That is how Pukatawagan[99] came to be. They broke away from the Peter Ballantyne Band and formed the Matthias Cologne Band in Pukatawagan.

"My grandfather, Peter,"[100] HA continued, "was my father's grandfather, but in our language, it is Grandfather or Mooshim. I call him Grandfather. He had a lot of power in the cultural way. The older people still talk about him, that he seemed to have a lot of power. He could talk to the animals, and he seemed to influence the animals. Whenever there was a crisis, he would go to the bush, and when he would come back out of the bush, he would have the answers. He would tell what would happen in the future. The people knew that he could talk to the animals because of the gifts he had in the cultural way."[101]

Siggins' account of Peter Ballantyne's early life sheds some light as to how he got his extraordinary powers. "Later renamed Peter Ballantyne, Wicikis was found at the age of about eleven, alone, clothed in a raw buffalo robe, and spearing small fish. He probably got his name, Wicikis meaning *one who stinks*, because the hides that he wore were raw, decomposing, and therefore stinking. He had spent much time alone as a child, possibly because he wandered away from his family and got lost, or maybe because his family died in one of the epidemics. During his time alone, struggling to survive, he developed the ability to predict the future."[102]

Siggins recorded Fred Ballantyne's memories of his grandfather Peter's predictions. "If white men come to our land, there will be a lot of them. Life is hard now, but it will be harder when the white man comes. One day (holding up a cup of water from Pelican Lake), you will have to pay for this."[103]

The gift of prophecy could have also been an inherent characteristic of Wicikis, who later was able to pass it on to future generations. HA recalled how his father, Wicikis' grandson predicted the future. "My dad told me things. I do not know how my dad knew; he must have learned them from his grandparents or his father. We would be around a campfire, and talking about the secret signs, all the signs of the way it is going to be when this world is going to come to an end." HA continued, "My dad told me things then that I see now. He told me, 'You see planes. They are quite free out there; they fly all over from here to there, and quickly. Later on, they are going to be flying so high that you will not even see them. They will just be noise that you hear that will tell you that they are there. A lot of this stuff, I do not think that I will see, but you will see. Your children and your grandchildren will have to live through that, if the world is still around.'

"He told me about all the secret signs of the way it is going to be when this world as we know it is going to come to an end. He said, 'Nothing will grow. Things will start to disappear. The animals will start to disappear. The air is not going to be much good. The water is going to be poisoned. There will be vehicles all over the north. The whole north, where we live now, will be just like ribbons, all over. There will be roads all over the north. People are going to be coming from the south, moving here, to the land that we cherish, that we love. They are going to more or less take it over, and control it like they do everything else. That is going to happen,'[104] he said."

Years later, FD had occasion to see how well HA's father could predict the weather. FD remembered, "One time the old man and I were out collecting wild rice the old fashioned way. We were in a canoe and I was paddling. The old man had two sticks, and he would bring the wild rice into the boat and pound it. It was a beautiful day, sunny, not a cloud in the sky, and this flock of geese went by. They were heading south, and the old man said, 'You watch. They are pulling the cold from the North. It is going to get cold; it is going to get windy.' I looked at him and thought, 'What do you know?' But within a half an hour, it had clouded over and it got very cold. He knew what he was talking about!"[105]

Another of HA's ancestors, his maternal grandfather, was chosen in 1919 to be the second chief of the Peter Ballantyne Band. Siggins wrote that "Chief Cornelius Whitebear was a famous medicine man-shaman with tremendous strength and power. He had a strong personality, was short tempered, and straightforward in what he said."[106] Siggins speculated, "Cornelius Whitebear's short-temper could have earned him a universal dislike. Members of the band requested that he be ousted from his office but this request was denied by the Indian agent who spent one day on the reserve asking questions and then ruled that Chief Whitebear was attempting to fight against evil and should therefore remain the chief."[107]

Cornelius Ballantyne, a son of Chief Peter Ballantyne and HA's paternal grandfather, was also very strong in his convictions. He did not agree with the treaties. Siggins explained, "In 1915, Cornelius Ballantyne refused to partake of the treaty payment, and then in 1919 he asked to be struck from the treaty altogether, becoming one of only two hundred fifty First Nation people between 1857 and 1920 in Canada to do so. As the result of his withdrawal from the treaty, he gave up all his treaty rights for himself, his wife, his children, and any future descendents. He was afforded the same privileges as white people. He did not have to stay on the reserve and answer to the Indian agent. He could obtain privately owned land. In 1924, he became enfranchised; he obtained the privileges of a citizen of Canada and could vote. In 1926, he was perhaps the only Rock Cree to be able to vote in the federal election."[108]

HA's story of Cornelius Ballantyne, who is buried on the original site of Sandy Bay,[109] confirmed Siggins' words and embellished the impact of Cornelius Ballantyne's decisions on the future generations. "My other grandfather did not agree with the treaties. He did not like them; he could foresee that the treaties would change people. He was right. Today, ninety percent of the people are on welfare. When treaties first came, the people did not get welfare; they got a net, flour, and a treaty bonus given to them on Treaty Day. If you lived on the reserve, the government would give you some kind of shack to live in. My grandfather did not agree with that. He did not believe that somebody had to look after him and his family, and that he had to live in a corral, meaning on a reserve like an animal."[110]

Bauche (2005) explained why accepting the treaty would have meant a loss of freedom for Aboriginal people. "The acceptance of treaty status for First Nations people was accompanied by the *Pass and Permit* system that reduced people's freedom. Repealed in 1951, the Pass system, whereby leaving the reserve was allowed only to those who received a pass from the Indian agent, was instituted in 1885 in an attempt to put an end to the Sundance. The Permit system required the First Nations person wishing to sell produce to receive a permit from the Indian agent. A person could not butcher an animal he/she had raised without a permit, even for their own use. The Indian agent held the power to grant or deny the permits and passes."[111]

HA explained, "My grandfather thought that he could take his family wherever he went and that he could provide for them there. He did not want handouts. He did not believe in that system; he wanted no part of it. He always worked. He worked for the Hudson's Bay Company, and for the French traders. There were different companies that used to trade by canoe. He spoke fairly good English. Where he learned it, I do not know. He could communicate with the Indian agent and the priest. The Indian agent kept telling my grandfather that he had to live in the reserve community of Pelican Narrows.[112] My grandfather disagreed with him. He said, 'No, I will live where I can provide for my family.' He had it out a couple of times with the Indian agent, and they got the priest and the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company involved. The disagreement was about him wanting to leave Pelican Narrows and going to where he could provide for his family.

"The Hudson's Bay manager said, 'He is a good provider. He can provide for his family no matter where he goes.' The priest did not agree with my grandfather leaving, but he had to agree with the Hudson's Bay manager who had said, 'Yes, he could provide.' The priest had influence over everything, and he said he could provide."

HA said, "The Indian agent had no choice. 'If you want to go, you go.' My grandfather never accepted anything from the band or the chief, his dad. He gave up his treaty rights for himself and his family, and left Pelican Narrows to work at the Island Falls Dam. He willingly gave up his treaty rights because he did not want to be controlled by his treaty number. If you had a treaty number, you had to stay on the reserve. You would be told what to do and where to go by the Indian agent. He did not want to be controlled by the Indian agent and he did not want the priest to control him. He did not want anybody to control him. He wanted to run his own life. He wanted to provide for his family the way he could, and the way he thought he should. So he gave up everything and left. That is why I lost my treaty rights at birth, because he gave up everything. My dad and all his other siblings never had treaty rights because he had given them away. My grandfather lived and died in Sandy Bay."[113]

Another strong ancestor was Jacob Ballantyne, HA's great uncle. Siggins recorded that Jacob Ballantyne, a grandson of Wicikis, accidentally shot his uncle Thomas when he mistook him for an animal on a hunting trip. He then moved to Pukatawagan.[114]

HA said, "Jacob was my father's uncle, but I call him *Grandfather*. Old Jacob was a medicine man. He never quit practising what he was doing, even in the days that there was a law that said that you were going to go to jail for practising the traditional beliefs. That was what he believed, how he worshipped, and where he got his answers.

"I remember seeing Grandfather on Jacob's Point, the other side of Churchill Bay from Sandy Bay. He lived out on the land all the time but he would paddle in to Sandy Bay and he and the old lady[115] would pick up their supplies: their salt, their sugar, and their tobacco. All they needed was the basics. My dad and I would go to visit with him. He had a sweat lodge where he prayed. He was a good doctor,[116] a very good doctor. Anyplace he went, he camped, gathered, and practised his medicine. He healed people. If you had a kidney ailment or a broken leg, he could cure you. He could do anything. He was a medicine man.

"As I grew older, I remember that he was still a doctor. Whenever you would ask him something he would say, 'I have to sleep on it. I have to ask the people I work for, the people I work with,' meaning The *Grandfathers*.[117] 'I will tell you tomorrow.' Later, he would come and find you. 'No, I cannot do anything for you,' he would tell you."[118]

In this account of another Mooshim, *Pegeewis'tsigwan*, HA told of extraordinary abilities to free himself from shackles and prison, while not running away until the Indian agent and priest gave up and granted him his freedom. "They would put my mooshim in jail for whatever reason. They would lock him up and take his tobacco and his pipe. The next morning he would be sitting outside, happily smoking a pipe. They would find him there. They finally let him go because they could not do anything to him. They would shackle him, and the next day the shackles would be off, so they let him go. His Cree name was Pegeewis'tsigwan, *Chicken-Head* in English. What his English name was, I do not know." [119]

Introducing WA

WA grew up in a white middle class family in Flin Flon, SK. Her father fought in World War II, married, and came back to Canada to work in Flin Flon as a baker. Her mother was a young bride from England who married a Canadian, left her family, and moved to the Canadian north. As was typical at the time, she did not have paid employment; her job was to keep the house and look after her husband. She had two children: a daughter, WA in this study, and a son who died about ten years before this study took place. WA's early life was one of attending school and, as extra-curricular activity, going to parties. She was committed as a teenager to a psychiatric hospital, the 1960s equivalent of a treatment centre, for a period of a few months. In the treatment centre, she lost thirty pounds of weight and decided that she would stop engaging in promiscuous activities. When she left the psychiatric centre, she met HA's brother then HA. They partied together. She married HA at the age of nineteen, after dating him for four years.[120]

WA and I were sitting together during a family gathering. In front of us was a shoe box full of pictures and other mementos of the past. I took out one picture and showed it to her. She said, "Ah, my mom in her youth. No wonder Dad fell in love with her in England and than brought her back to Canada as his war bride. She was a slender, dark haired beauty.[121]

"This is my parents' wedding photograph. Dad looks so proud in his army uniform with Mom, ever slim, standing along side him in her white wedding suit, dark hat, pearl earrings and purse. Tucked under her arm is her wedding bouquet.[122] Dad took her home to Canada, to Flin Flon where he got a job as a baker. I was born a while later. In this picture of me at age three, [123] I am standing in our front yard. I am wearing a long dress, hat, and stole, and posing on the grass in front of our white clapboard house. I do not have very many pictures of my ancestors. This next one is of my uncle Jerry, who served in the Great War.[124] He was very young at the time, probably in his early twenties. In this other picture, he posed in front of a tent with some of his fellow soldiers. He is second from the left, with his army uniform unbuttoned, smoking a cigarette.[125] They were quite a dapper group. uncle Jerry survived the war; he went back home to England, and is still alive today. This last picture is my uncle John.[126] uncle John was a baker, just like my dad."

WA reminisced, "My mom and dad would fight sometimes and then I could see my dad's frustration. They would be trying to sort out a problem. Dad would yell and he would hit the table or he would throw something across the room. I never saw him hit my mom and I do not remember her saying that he did. They were disagreeing about something so the frustration and that kind of stuff made sense somehow."[127]

HA's brother, LA had been listening. He countered, "WA was raised in an alcoholic home; her mother and father were alcoholic. When you grow up in an alcoholic home, there are different types of behaviours that you fall into. One of the behaviours, if you do not know any better, is to fall in love with an alcoholic. Her parents put her in a nut house[128] when she was a teenager. Somebody once told her it was because she was going out with an Indian.[129] She started hanging around with HA when she was fifteen and came to Sandy Bay when she was sixteen."[130]

WA recalled that her parents raised objections other than race regarding her choice of a life partner. "My mom never said it was because HA was an Indian. He was nine years older than I was, so Mom said 'He is too old for you. You have a better education than he does, so the educational difference is too great.' She did not bring up religion, she brought up the fact that he was older, she brought up the educational difference; she brought up the fact that he did not have a steady job and that he drank too much. Those were her objections. She never, ever once said it was because he was an Indian. The objection with my dad was that HA did not work all the time; he did not support his family."[131]

When he was an adult, SNA, HA and WA's son, realised that his grandmother had abused drugs. He said, "Until I got older, I never realised that a lot of the drinking problems and the abuse problems came just as much from my mother's side. I found out just a short while before my mother's mother died that basically she had been a functional junky her whole life."[132]

WA had little feeling of positive self-worth. WA remembered, "Part of my getting into the relationship with HA initially was my lack of self-esteem; part of it was not thinking I had much choice. HA was older, he was very good looking, he was very charming, and he was interested in me."[133]

BA, HA's brother, observed, "When I was trying to find my way in Flin Flon, I met WA. I met her a couple of years before she met HA. It seemed that she came from a nice family but for whatever reason, she was looking for a boyfriend. She was like a typical teenage girl is with boys, boy-crazy. That is how I met WA, through friends. I partied with her and different people. It seemed that she came from a nice family but for whatever reason, her confidence was shot and she was looking. Her mother was very nice; her father was very nice, but I suppose there were other things. Maybe it was in school, I do not know. I never went to school with her, but when I met her, she was trying to be something that I do not think she was."[134] NA recalled WA's lack of self-worth, "I could not think of anybody who would have that much love, to put up with that. Now I realise that love of self would not allow you to put up with that."[135]

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[97] Siggins, 2005, pp. 13-14

[98] Downriver refers to a point toward or nearer the mouth of a river (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2003, p. 376), in this case a point toward the place where the Churchill River flows into the Hudson Bay.

[99] Pukatawagan is a community located on the Churchill River, accessible by rail from The Pas and Cranberry Portage, MB. It is approximately 100 kilometres northeast of Flin Flon, MB (Canada's Northwest Territories official explorers' map, n.d.).

[100] Siggins (2005) noted that Peter Ballantyne was Chief of the Peter Ballantyne Band from its beginning in August 1900 to his death in 1917 (p. 38, p. 221). The chief, called the okimāw, gained that position usually because he was the best hunter, the smartest, the most knowledgeable, the most generous, and sometimes the person with the strongest supernatural powers (p. 214).

[101] HA's story, pp. 265-267

[102] Siggins, 2005, p. 33

[103] Siggins, 2005, pp. 33-34

[104] HA's story, 262

[105] FD's story, pp. 486-488

[106] Siggins, 2005, pp. 221-222

[107] Siggins, 2005, p. 222

[108] Siggins, 2005, pp. 220-221

[109] Field Notes, January 25, 2005

[110] The acceptance of treaty status for First Nations people was accompanied by the "Pass and Permit" system and a reduction of freedom, hence the expression "living in a corral." The Pass and Permit system restricted the First Nations people in leaving the reserve or selling their produce on or off the reserve. Repealed in 1951, the Pass system, whereby leaving the reserve was allowed only to those who received a pass from the Indian agent, was instituted in 1885 in an attempt to put an end to the Sundance. The Permit system required the First Nations person wishing to sell produce to receive a permit from the Indian agent. A person could not butcher an animal he/she had raised without a permit. The Indian agent held the power to grant or deny the permits and passes (Bauche, 2005).

[111] Bauche, 2005

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[112] Pelican Narrows, a community on Mirond Lake, is 70 kilometres southwest of Sandy Bay, along Highway 135 (Siggins, 2005, p. 10). It was the reserve community in which the Peter Ballantyne First Nation was established, and where the chief and council resided.

[113] HA's story, pp. 271-273

[114] Siggins, 2005, pp. 261-262

[115] "The old lady" is a commonly used term to describe an elderly woman. In this case, the old lady, who was originally from either Pukatawagan or Nelson House, refers to HA's great-uncle's wife (Field Notes, January 25, 2005).

[116] Medicine Men, usually elders with a lifetime of experience of curing people, were also called "doctors" in notations in the Hudson's Bay Company Post Journals written by white people (Siggins, 2005, p. 182). Cohen (2003) itemised the various healing practices used by Medicine Men or Traditional healers as diverse health practices and approaches (pp. 307-308), incorporating plants, animals, and/or mineral-based medicine (p. 217), spiritual therapies (pp. 307-308) and exercises applied singularly or in combination with each other.

[117] "The Grandfathers" are spirits in Traditional Spirituality. They are guardians, protectors, and spiritual advisors.

[118] HA's story, p. 263

[119] HA's story, p. 267

[120] Field Notes, January 25, 2005

[121] Picture 1

[122] Picture 2

[123] Ibid

[124] Picture 3

[125] Picture 4

[126] Picture 5

[127] WA's story, p. 358

[128] A nut house is a psychiatric hospital. This one was in Brandon, Manitoba.

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[129] Indian is a term possibly originating with Christopher Columbus who thought he had reached Asia when he had, in fact, reached the Caribbean. The term was used by Europeans to identify Aboriginal people of South, Central, and North America. The term is considered pejorative; the more preferred terms are "Native, Native American (in the United States), Aboriginal, or First Nations (in Canada)." No term enjoys widespread acceptance. In Canada, the legal definition of an Indian is contained in the Indian Act, legislation which first passed in 1876 (McCue, 1999, p. 1146).

[130] LA's story, p. 452

[131] WA's story, p. 319

[132] SNA's story, p. 376

[133] WA's story, 319

[134] BA's story, p. 411-413

[135] NA 's story, p.460

Chapter 7: Out of the darkness and into the light

After he moved to Sandy Bay, HA's life was one of learning new things: a new language, a new way to sustain himself, and a new culture. He explained, "My brother and I were very young, uneducated, not the best in the English language, just a strong back and willing to work. We set out. We could not stay in Sandy Bay because there was nothing that we could do there. I started in construction. I knew nothing about it but I was willing to work and willing to learn. Working in construction, you worked really hard and you drank really hard to have fun. You made big money then went on a drunk for three or four days. Every payday, you would get four days off so you could go for four days and get drunk or whatever. Every payday if we were in a camp, everybody would disappear. We would not stay in camp. Everybody would come back to the bunkhouses drunk and drink, although it was not allowed in bunkhouses. In order to belong, I got sucked into not just the work part, but the supposed fun part. That is how I got into the drinking that later on ruined me so badly."[136]

Currie (1969) addressed the plight of First Nations people in mainstream society, "Aboriginal people find in the cities that their education has not prepared them. They have little or no skills for hire; they are even further down the economic totem pole; they are again on welfare; they are unprepared for urban living – living by the clock, paying rent, the impersonality, the high cost of living, the rush, the loss of freedom."[137]

BA recalled his own anger at society when he could not provide an adequate living for his wife and family, "If someone does not have a goal and does not see the future, then they have nothing. I understand that. When we first got married, I went through that, because I only got low-paying labour jobs. The first Christmas, I could not even pay for our rent because I was sick and the job that I was doing did not pay enough.[138] There was no hope. I loved my wife and our first child. She was pregnant, and there were times when there was no hope. I got angry at society. Everywhere the society was rich. Here I am, supposedly on my land through the treaties, and I have nothing. I got very, very angry so I thought of violence toward society at that point."[139]

LA recalled, "They would come, my two older brothers, and they always had other guys with them. They used to go around in a group, pool their money, and just drink and drink; all they did was drink. They probably had jobs because they were always in the bush; they were working but when that finished they came back to town." [140]

There would be fights in the community. NA recalled, "What I remember about my uncle was that he was always violent. My first recollection of him was when my stepfather and he were fighting in the house. My stepfather attacked him with a rake after they had had an argument. They had the fight outside, and then they brought it in the house. My sister was a baby; my uncle threw my stepfather on the playpen that my sister was in. If it were not for my aunt grabbing her, she probably would have died. People were screaming and it was bloody."[141]

I will never do it again

"The first time that HA hit me was before we were married," WA recalled. "We went to Sandy Bay. I was drinking then; we were both drinking.

We were at his uncle's place, and we had been drinking quite a bit. HA was passed out. An ex-boyfriend came looking for me; I went with him. He tried to get me in bed, but I would not have any of it. I was pretty smart. I must have been on a diet; I had some Saccharin tablets in my purse. I faked a heart attack, and slipped a Saccharin tablet under my tongue, pretending it was a nitro-glycerine tablet. My ex-boyfriend fell for it and left me alone so I went back to where my fiancé was passed out. When I got back there, HA was up and he wanted to know where I had been. His uncle must have told him who I had gone with. He slapped me and broke my glasses. I put it down to: he was drunk, I was drunk, and I never should have gone with my ex-boyfriend in the first place. HA told me the same thing. 'If you had not made me mad, I would never have hit you. I am really sorry. I will never do it again.'[142]

"The second time that HA hit me was three weeks before we got married. He had been drinking. He was drunk, and he wanted to eat. I was not drinking but he was drinking with his mom and dad. I fixed him a plate just the same as everybody else had and he decided it was dog food. He got mad and he threw it at me and accused me of feeding him dog food. He came after me, hit me, and his dad grabbed him. His dad pulled him off me, held him down, and told me to get out of there. His dad was not a big man but his dad pulled him off. He told me, 'Get out of here. Get your jacket and go. Run.' I grabbed my jacket. HA was struggling on the floor and his dad was having a hard time holding him back. I kicked HA in the groin as I ran out the door."[143]

Marriage will make it better

WA and HA decided to have a dry wedding. WA recalled, "When we were married, there was no alcohol at our wedding because we did not tell anybody we were getting married and in those days, it was home brew. We had not told anybody ahead of time that we were getting married so nobody had any time to make up a batch to get ready. It was not a money day so there was not much booze in the community. After the wedding and after the dance, we went visiting to somebody's place. HA had a bottle or two of beer."[144]

WA said, "I had this idea that once we were married, everything was going to be fine because this is what he told me. It was nice to believe the fairy tale but the fact that he was the one that kept telling me the fairy tale made it even better."[145] When marriage did not help, WA was confused, "I remember quite clearly, when we were first married, those first three or four weeks. We were living at my parents' place in Flin Flon; HA went out drinking and I could not figure it out because he said, 'You know, if you are my wife, then I know, having you as my wife, I will not need to drink anymore. I will have everything I need.' I was nineteen and I was naive enough to believe it."[146]

Moving will solve the problem

When marriage did not solve the problem of HA's drinking and fighting, the couple began to look for other explanations. WA explained, "Over the course of the next few months, he was drinking because we were living in Flin Flon. So we moved to Winnipeg because that was going to make it better. Four months later, we were living in Winnipeg; his uncle came to the city and they went and got drunk. It was his uncle's fault. He did not try to hit me that time, but I could not face the rejection. I took an overdose of aspirin, and oh, did I ever get sick![147]

"Then, the problem was we were living with BA and SNA so we got a place of our own and that was going to make it better. In 1969, we lived about six months in an apartment. I remember one fight in that apartment; HA just flipped right out. I do not remember what triggered it. He was drunk. He ripped the phone out of the wall. I hit him back that time and then I hid under the bed. He was sitting down on the floor with his back up against the wall. He stood up, and it was an all metal-framed bed. He lifted it right up against the wall."[148]

When marriage and moving did not solve the problem, WA began to believe that her actions were the problem. She said, "I was always looking for a reason why he behaved the way he did and I was always assuming that it was my fault, that somehow I was responsible. When he did drink, I could not figure out what it was, so it had to be something I was doing."[149] Pregnancy seemed to help; the violence stopped during the first pregnancy. WA said, "When I was pregnant with SNA, we moved back to Flin Flon and he was born. SNA was born in May of 1970 and HA never laid a hand on me through the whole pregnancy."[150]

Assault charges and revictimisation

In 1972, HA assaulted WA and WA charged HA with assault but the legal process revictimised her. SA described the assault, "The very first time that I experienced the violence in WA and HA's home, SNA was about two years old. My oldest boy still remembers it. We had come to visit. When we got there, HA was not home, just WA and SNA. We were talking and laughing when all of a sudden HA came charging in. He did not see us. HA came and just ploughed WA right in the face. There was blood all over. I went and I jumped in between them and I started screaming, 'Stop it! Stop it!' The look on HA's face told me that he had not known we were there. Then BA came and tried to pull HA away. With our kids there, it just infuriated HA more. WA ran out into a fenced-in area, and then could not get out. HA was trying to get in. I was hanging on to the gate for dear life, and he was swinging both of us around. But I was not going to let him hit her. The kids were screaming and crying. Our kids had never seen this happen before. And to think that just before that we were all sitting around, laughing and enjoying ourselves. We had been there for half an hour or maybe one hour when this happened."[151]

WA recalled, "SA was there. BA was visiting somebody but there was me and SA, her two boys, and SNA. HA and BA came in. I was sitting at the table. HA came around and he stood in front of me. He said, 'Can I come home now?'

"I said, 'No.' HA attacked me. I was pregnant with D; I do not think he knew. I do not even know if I knew for sure. I was sitting there, and the next thing I knew I was on the floor. I had a big bruise on my back, because he hit me so hard. He blacked both my eyes. One blow right in the face and I hit the floor, and I had gone into the foetal position to protect our baby. He hit me on the back. BA had an arm in a cast, and he was trying to stop HA. I crawled outside. SA had to grab SNA because SNA tried to jump on his dad.

"The police took my statement. They took SA's statement; they took BA's statement. All three statements were that HA had walked in the house, asked a question, and then attacked me. Later in court, they read the charge. 'In the course of a family fight, the defendant struck his common-law wife, giving her a black eye. The accused regrets the incident, he was very drunk at the time, does not remember doing it and he is pleading guilty.' I just sat there. Because this was 1972, common-law marriages were not recognised as legal unions. We were legally married and I had made that clear; we were married. The judge gave him a sixty-dollar fine and thirty days to pay. That was it.

"HA phoned me that night and I answered the phone. He said, 'You really thought you got me. You thought you were so smart. You thought you were going to get me; you thought you were going to send me to jail. Well, you did not.' Then he hung up. His voice was just cold, ice cold. The cruel side of him that I had never seen before scared me."[152]

Going to school

LA recalled that WA made some changes in her life after that incident. He said, "Shortly after that, WA went to Winnipeg and I did not see much of her until about four or five years later when I went there to visit. She had left him; she got a little apartment and started going to school. She wanted to be a nurse or something."[153]

The separation did not last for very long, however. WA recalled the day that she acknowledged that the violence was like a dance: a dance in which she played an equal part. She said, "In 1974, I realized that I could use the violence; I was also participating in it. I knew how to make him explode in order to release the tension. I had felt it building and building. I remember thinking as I walked up the stairs that I would not have to say too much and he would explode, hit me, and then he would go to sleep. The pattern was already established. Later, I said the things that triggered him. He exploded: grabbed me by the hair, pulled quite a bit of hair out, and hit me a couple of times in the face. Then I went into the bedroom. He passed out on the bed. I did not wash any of the blood off my face, just left it. I deliberately left the blood on my face, I deliberately fell asleep with the shirt that he had ripped, and I left the hair on the floor. I went to bed with my back to him. In the morning, SNA had to go to school. I just gave HA an elbow and said, 'Get him up for school.' He got up, got SNA his breakfast, got him dressed, and sent off to school. I just stayed in bed. He got DA set up with her breakfast and her cartoons. Then he came to the bedroom and when I heard him come back, I rolled over so he could see. He just looked because he did not remember any of it. I had dried blood on my face; I had a black eye. My shirt was all ripped, and I had some marks on my neck. I just rolled over and looked at him. He did not say anything, he just looked. I do not remember for sure, but I probably said, 'Yeah, this is what you did, now get out of here.' I threw him out. He left; he was not going to argue."[154]

HA remembered, "A lot of times, I could not go home afterward. I did not want to go home. There was too much shame when I sobered up. I knew that it was wrong. I had to be drinking to get violent with WA. I would never do that when I was sober, not stone cold sober. I learned the violence when I was drinking and it came out when I was drinking. But when I was sober, I did not think like that."[155].

DA recalled the incident, "I think that the earliest fight that I remember I was two years old. It was not the physical fight that I remember, it was the aftermath. It was waking up in the morning and my mom not getting out of bed, going to her, and knowing something was wrong. That little, and already knowing they had been fighting: knowing that she could not get out of bed, seeing the black eyes. I thought, 'Ho – lee!' Two years old, I thought it was just in my head. I did not think I could remember that far back."[156]

HA recalled, "Later it came to a point where I had to go to work. I managed to go back to work for quite some time. But then the work became less and less, because the drinking took control. I was not in control. The bottle was taking over and I could not stop it."[157] During that time, HA spent a lot of time on the couch recovering from drinking bouts. DA remembered, "One of my strongest memories of our house in Winnipeg is my dad being on the couch. It seemed like he was always on the couch, always sleeping on the couch and I do not know if I thought he was lazy or if he was passed out on the couch all the time or what it was. But when I think about that house and I think about the inside, it seems that he was on the couch almost eighty percent of the time."[158] NA recalled, "HA always seemed to be drunk, or he was so grouchy that nobody would want to be around him. When he was recovering from drinking, everybody did the eggshell walk[159] around him. In pictures of him at Christmas, and he was just wrecked: the scariest, ugliest face, this lump on the couch, and my aunt and others smiling in the pictures."[160]

An on-going struggle for control

WA began to be aware of her part in the on-going power struggle in her marriage. She remembered, "It was always a power struggle to see who was going to be in control. If I triggered HA and he blew up, then he went into guilt and remorse and I had the power. Because then what I did was I turned to him and said, 'Look at what you did. Now get out of here.' I was in charge. I had control of my environment again. That empowered me. Later, I would get bored to a certain extent because I was not used to the calmness. As much as I hated it, I was used to functioning in the high tension and the chaos. HA would want to come back. He would be nice, he would beg, he would plead, he would cajole, he would flatter, he would do all those types of things. He was attentive, patient, and considerate. I was in a position of power. Eventually, I would let him come back and he would come back. That was when I really became aware that there was a pattern to what happened. The cycle would start again and I began to realise that I played a part in it."[161]

LA was certain that WA's letting HA back into her life was about her giving all her power away. He said, "I think her problem was that she was a *doormat.*[162] She had this ideal about marriage, and there was no place that she could run that HA could not find her. Somehow, she was led back into the trap."[163]

Few people knew that WA drank. LA said, "I do not believe she ever drank; I never saw her drink. I have never been around when WA actually drank. I never knew her to be a drinker. I have never seen a bottle of beer, or wine, or whiskey around her. Even when she first came to Sandy Bay, I never saw that. Maybe she hid it, but I never saw her drink alcohol."[164] SNA confirmed, "I do not remember my mom being drunk, but I know in Sandy Bay there were periods when she drank a lot. I was never around when she did that; she must have whisked me away to somebody's house."[165]

Starting to change

In 1975, WA started to change. She said, "By 1975, I hardly ever went out with HA because he would drink to a certain point, then I knew that there was nothing I could do, he was going to get violent. It did not matter if we were with people or if we were alone."[166] HA confirmed, "When we had the kids, she drank only once in a while."[167]

SNA recalled, "I must have been about five when I remember one incident really clearly. It was morning and my dad was going away. I followed him to the door. I remember asking him where he was going, but he would not say; he just sort of brushed me off. I followed him to the door, the door closed, and he was gone. That was early in the day. That night he came home and he was drunk. I just remember it was really dark in the house, my mom and dad were in the bedroom and I was not, but I could hear them in there. It sounded like they were laughing and having a good time. It was loud; both of them were talking and laughing. Then it turned. It turned really quickly and then they were fighting. I think I saw a little of it, but somehow I just saw figures. I just remember the impression that just like that, [snapped fingers] it went in a different direction. It was really scary all of a sudden. Up to that point, it seemed like it was good and then all of a sudden it was terrible. That is a clear memory that I have of the violence in my home."[168]

Trying to get sober

In the mid 1970s, HA began to make attempts to abstain from drinking alcohol. WA described those attempts. "HA quit drinking in 1975 for the first time. He just quit, and he was miserable. He managed to stay dry for about six weeks. I was glad when he started drinking again because he was just the most miserable person on the face of this earth. In 1976, he quit again but that time he was actually nice. He took the kids places, took me places. We would go out and do things and he was pleasant to be around. He was a lot of fun. That was a nice six weeks. In 1977, he went into the Rehab in Sandy Bay and actually sobered up for almost eighteen months."[169] BA noticed, "When their children started growing, the drinking started getting less. Then a different thing happened with HA. He started going to meetings then started to learn about how to deal with different things. He found that he had a gift for the gab and that he could deal with almost anybody that he wanted in a meeting situation, whether it would be for trapping, fishing, or for other community politics. He started having self-confidence, and the drinking started going down."[170]

HA did not want WA to be drinking. WA recalled, "I remember sitting around in the living room drinking, and saying to HA, 'Boy, drinking is a good idea. I do not feel a thing.' He just hauled off and hit me. Whack! Sent me spinning. 'It is bad enough that I drink, you should not be drinking.' I remember that time, I was bawling because I was way down again. I was not supposed to drink; that was not appropriate for me. HA could drink, his friends could, any other women could, but not me."[171]

Losing weight will make it better

WA used food in the same way that HA used alcohol. "HA would go out and get drunk. My belief was, 'Who would ever want me anyway?' My self-esteem was low, so I ate. I would stay home; get a big bag of Tacos and a pound of butter. I would sit and watch TV. That was my Friday night. The kids would go to bed; I would sit and watch the old black and white TV, two channels in Winnipeg, and eat nacho chips dipped in butter. The next day I would be so sick because butter was my comfort food. Oh, would I have a bellyache! So he would have his hangover; I would have my hangover. The weight just kept piling on, and piling on and piling on. Part of me knew that I needed to do something for my health. I weighed two hundred eighty-six pounds, and was five foot three inches tall. I recognized I could not continue like that. I was too young, I had young children, I was working, and it was physically demanding work. I could not continue that way."[172]

WA began to think that her weight was contributing to the violence. She decided to undergo intestinal bypass surgery to rectify her weight problem. "By 1976, I had already made the decision that I needed to have surgery. I was so grossly obese and I thought, 'If I were not so fat, he would not do this. If I were not so fat, he would not treat me the way he treats me. He would not drink the way he does; he would not hit me.' I went and saw one doctor about surgery and gave him my medical history, including telling him that I once had hepatitis. He told me that, with a history of hepatitis, I was not a Student for surgery because liver damage was always a possibility after the surgery. Then, I met someone who told me that she had that surgery after having liver damage from hepatitis. I thought, 'They did it on her, surely they can do it on me!' I found out who her doctor was, and went to him. It was fifty-fifty. Fifty percent was health reasons, but fifty percent was to stop the violence. I thought, 'When I am more physically attractive, he will have to stop.'

"I had the surgery[173] done in October of 1976. I remember talking to HA about having it done, and he did not want me to. He was afraid of surgery; he was afraid that I might die. He did not think it was necessary; he never said that my weight was an issue. In fact, the opposite, he said one of the reasons that he picked me was because of my size. The weight issue was not in him, it was in me. That was my view, not his."[174]

After the surgery, WA lost half of her body-weight. She became very absorbed in the process, and quit focussing on HA. "I went through the whole process with the determination that I was going to come out of it fine. When I got home, I was going to get back on my feet quickly, and I was going to be back at work within six weeks. I was not going to have any complications. I did not. I was at work in six weeks, and my weight loss was steady. Over the eighteen months after the surgery, from October of 1976 to July of 1978, I lost one hundred thirty two pounds. I went down to one hundred thirty-six pounds. I lost almost half of my body weight over that time period. I have pictures of myself taken at different times. The more weight I lost, the less my feet hurt. I could buy clothes; I could get clothes. Somebody could give me clothes, and I could actually wear them. I became quite involved in that whole process. I was not paying as much attention to HA and to what he was doing."[175]

Moving to Sandy Bay

The community of Sandy Bay was changing. NR said, "In 1976, this community was much better than it is now. Many people had joined Al-Anon and AA. A lot of positive things were happening; they were improving their lifestyle with their family and their friends. Everybody was more involved doing other things rather than drinking."[176]

During this time, HA sobered up in Sandy Bay. WA recalled, "I knew that community had changed and I came back for a short stay." She explained, "When I went, there were a lot of people who were not drinking. It was amazing the number of people that I had known as drinkers and some of them as very abusive drinkers that had become sober. Earlier, there had not been any decent housing. Now there was the chance of having a decent house so we stayed there for two months to see what it was like and I decided to move back permanently. I told HA that I could live there, went back to Winnipeg, packed up everything, and came back.

"We had a little house with no running water. It had two bedrooms and another bedroom in a lean-to. The house consisted of a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms in the main part of the house, and then the other bedroom in the lean-to. In our bedroom, we had a dresser and a double bed. In our son's bedroom, there was a single bed, and a dresser. In the living room, there was a Valley Comfort[177] stove, a hide-a-bed, and a TV on a cabinet. There might have been an end table in there. In the kitchen, there was a fridge and stove, some cupboards, and table and chairs. Then there was the porch. The house was not really nicely built or anything.[178]

"I remember that when I got up there, I got involved with the local school board. I kept losing weight and more weight and more weight and I started getting active in the community. There was not much to do socially. I got on the local school board more for something to do than anything else. My ex-boyfriend was on the board. That was fun. I thoroughly enjoyed it because I was bugging him. I had gone out with him for a while, and then I quit seeing him. Then HA and I had started going together, and he would come and try to talk me into going back with him. I told him, 'No. I have a much better boyfriend now.' I did anything that I could do to rub his nose in what he had lost. Part of my interest in community education was just to give me a little fun.

"I do not know what HA thought. HA knew that my ex-boyfriend was on the school board. It was not something that we ever talked about. He never said anything. I used to always get all cleaned up and fixed up before I would go to the meetings. I did not just wash my face and go in my dirty old clothes. I was playing a game there. Part of it was, 'Now that I am skinny, you had better watch it. I am now attractive. I am managing; I am functioning quite well. You have not beaten me down.'"[179]

Another pregnancy

"In the spring of 1978, I had a really bad bowel infection. That was one of the things with the surgery: every so often, I would get a severe bowel infection. That was the first one I had, and it was awful. I had frothy bowel movements, just watery. I knew that my electrolytes were out of balance because I had this odd taste in my mouth. My skin was dry and I felt crappy. I finally went to the doctor. The doctor told me I had a bowel infection, put me on medication, and within three or four days, I felt better.

"In the summer of 1978, Mom and Dad came up to Sandy Bay for a visit with us. They spent about three weeks with us and then the kids and I went to Flin Flon with them. HA would not go. He did not want to go on holidays; he was too busy fishing. The kids and I went on our own. I was tired. I was watching TV and Mom said to me, 'Man, you are getting fat. Are you pregnant again?' I said, 'No, I just bloat a lot,' because I bloated so badly after the surgery. I just said, 'It is whatever I have eaten.' Then I started thinking, 'I do not remember when my last period started.' I thought about it, and realised that it had been at least three months since I had my period. I no longer worried about getting pregnant, because I had the Dalkon Shield[180] inserted in 1973.

"In 1977, I heard that they were taking it off the market because there was a high incident of maternal death. When a woman got pregnant with the Dalkon Shield in place, the dual filament string, which was part of the device, tended to act like a wick to transmit bacteria from the vagina to the uterus, resulting in a septic abortion and an infection that killed some women. I remembered hearing about that, as well as something about the shield being taken off the market. At the time, I thought, 'I will deal with that later; it is not a big deal. Besides if I get pregnant I do not want another baby so then I will have a double reason for an abortion. I have got to have an abortion because keeping it with the shield will kill me and then I do not want another kid anyway.'

"So there I was, probably pregnant, with no idea of how long I had been pregnant. My head was full of everything except myself. I spent quite a bit of time thinking and realised that I did not remember having my period since May. It was now August. I thought about the window for therapeutic abortions and realised that I was getting to the end of it. I remember coming back to Sandy Bay and telling HA because he had met us somewhere and picked us up. We talked. I told him that I thought I was pregnant again and what I was worried about in terms of the pregnancy. He was quite distant, sort of disconnected from the whole process.

"I went up to the clinic, and then I spent probably three weeks running back and forth to the clinic because the doctors came up twice a week. First, I went to the nurses, and got it confirmed, 'Yes, I was pregnant.' Next, I told the nurses what my concerns were. I told them that I needed to know the risks. They told me that the shield had probably fallen out but I saw the first doctor that came to town. The doctor that I spoke with said, 'Oh, I quit using those Dalkon Shields because I could never get them in. Then, I could not remove them.'

I was thinking, 'Great! You cannot take them out on purpose and you guys are telling me not to worry, mine has probably fallen out? I do not think so.' I kept nagging at the nurses, telling them that I had to go out for an ultrasound. I needed to know if this Dalkon Shield was still in place. If it were still in place, it could kill me. I needed to know what my risks were. I knew that if I needed a therapeutic abortion, then I was getting to the end of the window; it was getting late in the pregnancy.

"I remember the doctors coming to Sandy Bay and saying, 'Oh, I forgot to check.' By then, of course, I was getting into a real emotional state because I was scared and because I had no support. I was panicking more, and more, and more, and more. Finally, in early September, they sent me to Saskatoon. My main questions were, 'If I am pregnant and the Dalkon Shield is in place, then what is going to happen?' The only thing he could tell me about the Dalkon Shield was that it must have fallen out when I had the really bad bowel infection. I had an ultra sound done, and found out that the Dalkon Shield had fallen out. I talked to a gynaecologist whose main concern was pregnancy after my intestinal bypass surgery. The bypass surgery had basically created a mal-absorption syndrome.

"I remember coming home and being quite happy. I was finally off the roller coaster. I was pregnant. I was healthy. There was no risk. The Dalkon Shield was gone. Another baby? What the heck. I was four or four and a half months pregnant and I had begun to show. Another baby was not so bad. I came home after having come to a resolution on that, and I was all excited. HA's response was, 'No big deal.' He was disconnected from the whole process. The kids were excited.

"On Monday morning, there was a pink stain on the bed about the size of a quarter. I remember looking at it and wondering what it was but I did not want to address it. I got everybody up. SNA had to go to school and DA was in school too. HA had to go to work. I got everybody up and mobile. Everybody was gone, I went to the bathroom and I thought that something happened. Again, this was not something that I wanted to deal with. Later in the morning, I went to the bathroom and I felt a gush. There were definite blood stains in the toilet bowl, and there were blood stains on my panties. When HA came home for lunch, I told him, ‘I think I have to go up and see the nurse because I am bleeding. Something is not right.’

“I went to the clinic and the nurses sent me out right away. I got into the hospital in Flin Flon and they put on a heartbeat monitor. They could not hear anything but my bowel sounds were very loud because of the surgery. It was hard to tell if there was a heartbeat. They could not hear it. By three in the morning, I used the bedpan and I thought I passed a blood clot. When the nurse came in to take the pan, she told me that I had passed the baby. It did not really feel like a baby; it felt like a clot. They took me down to the operating room, put me under, and did a D and C.[181] When I woke up the next morning, they told me that I could go home later that day. I phoned home and told HA what had happened. He came in to pick me up, had a friend with him, and they hunted rabbits on the side of the road all the way home. I had nobody to talk to and I remember I was more worried about him and the kids than I was about myself. I went home to try and take care of everybody else. I explained it to the kids and phoned my mom and dad and told them. That was hard and that was the 18th of October.

“My emotions went just wacky. I went to the hospital because of my emotions. I was just wacky. I remember saying to the doctor, ‘I just need a couple of day to rest. I just cannot handle things.’ I went into the hospital for a couple of days. The doctor was going to write me a prescription for something but I said, ‘No, I do not want any medication.’[182]

An affair

"About Halloween, HA went to Winnipeg because he wanted to trade in his vehicle. Then one of our family members called and told me that he was drinking again. I went down to get him because I can remember thinking, 'If he is drunk, at least I know what I am dealing with. All the other stuff up to then, I could not figure out. I would not admit that he was fooling around. I would not look at it. Yet, I knew that was what it was. I went to Winnipeg on the bus. I was going to get HA and I was going to get the truck, bring it home. Now that he was drunk, I knew what I was dealing with. It was not until I walked up to the door, knocked on the door and a woman answered and would not let me in that I knew what was going on. He was having an affair.

"I did not bring him back to Sandy Bay. He would not come with me but he gave me the keys to the truck. I got the keys to the truck and drove the truck home. I had been in Winnipeg a couple of days; I was exhausted, driving at two, three in the morning. His brother was with me but I only let him drive for about twenty minutes because he did not drive much then. I was coming home on two-dollar tires, getting back to Sandy Bay, and then having two kids to take care of. I had a truck that I did not know if there were payments to be made on but that was not important. I had no job so I had to go on welfare.[183]

"Two weeks before HA started his affair, his sister had asked me about a woman in the community whose husband had an ongoing relationship with another woman, 'What would you do if you were in her position? How would you handle it?' I said I would not put up with it; I would be gone like a shot. Then I was in that very position and I was doing exactly the opposite. 'So what is wrong with me? Why am I stuck? Why cannot I do anything? Why am

I such a mess?' I was destroyed. Then I said, 'God will save us.' I would do this fluctuating with my mood swings. Everything would be fine and then I would go down into the depths of despair. I went to church; I paid Father to say mass. I was really grasping at straws. I figured if HA just came home and stayed in Sandy Bay then everything would be all right. I would have control of him; things would get back to normal. None of it worked. I do not remember getting any comfort from church. What I wanted was to get a miracle. Nothing happened. I started drinking.

"One episode of violence occurred shortly after I started drinking and I was just so mad. We had the red truck; HA had come home, and we were drinking at the house. HA was getting mad at me, and he said he was going back to Winnipeg. I do not remember what I was not doing that he wanted me to do, or thought I should do, or I was giving him a rough time or something. HA said, 'I am going back to Winnipeg; I am going to go live with my girlfriend because at least she does not treat me like this.'

"My response was, 'You may be going but you are not taking that truck.' The truck was the focal point. I had a set of keys to the truck. I had to go out, get in the truck, and pull it out of the driveway on to the road. He came running after me. I was not taking this truck; he was going to have this truck. I was driving up the road he jumped in front of it, then on the truck, got on the hood, and kicked in the windshield. I was not stopping so he kicked in the windshield, crawled in the truck through the windshield, hit me, and made me turn the truck around and park it back in the yard.

"The next thing I remember was the next morning. The two of us were laughing about this. Here was this truck with a kicked in windshield and him calling a tow truck to get it towed into Flin Flon to get the windshield replaced. He did not have a job; I did not have a job. The cost of the tow into Flin Flon and a new windshield was over four hundred dollars and we were laughing about it as if it was funny. Laughing, joking about it, and drinking. I remember thinking that this drinking was not a good idea."

NA said, "I just watched my aunt deteriorate. I watched her wanting to make a life for her two children. We, as children, would rally to her and we would try to protect her, but my uncle got violent with us too. He would pick on her more or we would not be allowed to go there but we would go anyway. I remember my aunt sometimes saying, 'You kids should go,' and I knew that something was going to happen. Then we realised that we were making things worse for my aunt so we would just back off. My aunt raised my siblings, her biological kids, and me, and then foster kids and cousins, and younger sisters and brothers-in-law. My aunt was always protective of her kids. She tried to act like nothing was happening but as the violence escalated SNA and DA became more witness to it."[184]

Moving to Saskatoon

WA decided to move to Saskatoon. She said, "I could not stand living in Sandy Bay anymore. The pain was too great; it hurt too much to live there. Saskatoon was far enough away so HA and I went to Saskatoon and found a place to rent. Two weeks later, we sold everything we did not want, loaded what we wanted on a one-ton garbage truck, covered it with tarps and left.

"We got as far as Pelican Narrows and HA went looking for a drink. The best man at our wedding was with us. I got so angry having to wait for HA that I told the man with us, 'I am taking this truck myself.'

"He said, 'You cannot do that.'

"I said, 'Well, I am doing it.'

"He countered, 'Then I am going with you.' So now there was the best man from our wedding, the two kids and me, and I was driving this one-ton truck. It was a standard.[185] I only had my license for three or four months. I had never driven a truck like this and there I was. HA got a ride from somebody and he chased us. I pulled over because he came up behind us.

"He came along on the driver's side. I had the window open and he smashed me right in the face. 'What do you think you are doing? Where do you think you are going? You think you are going to take off with him, and leave me behind?' There was all this screaming and yelling and crying and blood and fighting.

"The best man got out. He kept trying to tell HA, 'I could not let her. She would not stop. I could not stop her and I sure could not let her take off by herself with the kids. I had to come along with her. I had to. I had no choice. I could not let her go by herself.' Then he got in the vehicle that HA had caught a ride in and went back to Pelican.

"HA and his brother got in the truck and away we went to Saskatoon. We almost ran out of the gas on the Hanson Lake Road.[186] We were in between the junction[187] and the first gas station,[188] and we were running out of gas. I said, 'God will save us.' HA said, 'If you think God is going to take care of us then you had better start praying.' We were almost out of gas on the

Hanson Lake road on a Saturday afternoon in the middle of January and it was thirty-five degrees below zero.

"I can remember saying, 'That is okay, God will take care of us.' Like my mood swings, I would have all the faith in the world and everything would be fine. Then I would go down into the depths of despair. A vehicle came around the corner, and we flagged him down. They had five gallons of gas. We got five gallons of their gas and we made it to the next gas station. The carburetor was icing up or something so we were burning more gas than we should have. We stayed overnight in Prince Albert that night and went to Saskatoon in the morning. Around Warman, we broke down and some people who were on their way to church gave HA and SNA a ride to go and get gas. The gas was going straight through that truck. We finally got to Saskatoon and got moved in. Then, HA and his brother had to go back to Sandy Bay because they had to take the truck back. We had used the village garbage truck to move. They unloaded everything, stayed one night, and then left the next day and went back. Then I was on my own with the kids."

What do I do, God?

The move to Saskatoon gave WA a change of scenery, but she did not find relief from her emotional pain there. She recalled, "I had not been there very long when someone told me that I should go to Calder.[189] 'You need to get help.' I replied, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah. I will be fine. I need a job.' I would sit on the floor in the living room in my Saskatoon home and praying. I had no groceries; I had no money. I had gotten my welfare cheque but I had spent it all; I had nothing. I was in Saskatoon with no family, nobody to turn to. I would sit with the family bible. I would ask, 'What do I do God? Do I divorce him or do I stay?' I would open the bible to a random page. Our bible had not been read much at all; it had no creases. Opening it was as random as anyone could get. Every time I opened it, I could find a passage on those two pages that said, 'Stay.' While I was doing this, 'Oh God, rescue me' stuff, I was not doing anything other than job hunting. I had gone to all the nursing homes, the hospitals, even the clinics, and applied for work. I put an ad in the paper to do private nursing. I continued to drink. The violence started again. HA would come and go. When he was there, I would drink with him. When he was not there, I would go drinking with HA's cousins."[190]

WA said, "I remember sitting on the floor in that place. I had no furniture; we had a three-bedroom bottom of a Toronto split. We had three mattresses, two singles and a double. I had a washer/spin dryer. The kids had a little table and chair set, and I had an ironing board and a step stool. We had virtually nothing for groceries by then. I think I had a box of chicken noodle soup and a box of macaroni, practically no groceries in the house. I was sitting there and thinking, 'God, you had better do something because I have done everything I know how to do. Now I do not know what to do; I just do not know what to do.' Then, I saw the mailman come and when I went up to the mailbox and opened it, there were all my unemployment cheques, close to fifteen hundred dollars in unemployment insurance payments. I bought a bunch of groceries and took the kids out to supper and to a show. I was able to get the phone hooked up. The next two weeks were very busy with getting furniture and getting established."[191]

In Saskatoon, WA started a fight with HA that ended up with SNA calling the police and HA being arrested. She remembered, "It was a Saturday afternoon and we were sitting around in the living room drinking. I got this idea in my head; I was going to knock him out. I had one of those wine bottles with the bubble in the bottom of the glass and it was fairly thick. I figured that if I hit him, it would knock him out. I cracked him right across the back of the head. I did not knock him out. The next thing I knew, I was in the closet, HA was throwing punches at me and my brother-in-law jumped up (he had been passed out on the floor) and started swinging at me. I was in the closet and HA was throwing punches at me. Thank God, there were winter coats hanging in that closet; I ducked. My brother-in-law only swung once or twice, then all of a sudden, he came out of his black-out realized who he was hitting, and then he started pulling HA off me. SNA had to go next door and call the police that time. The cops came and put HA and his brother into the drunk tank. By this time I had learned that laying charges would only make everything worse. The cops said, 'We have to let him out in the morning.'

"I told them, 'I will not lay charges, it just makes things worse.'" SNA remembered the same incident. He said, "I remember having to go two doors down to my friend's house to call the police to come and take my dad away because they were fighting. He was violent and I think my mom tried to break a bottle over his head to stop him from attacking her. I think she explained that if she knocked him out, then he would not be able to get aggressive with her. It did not work; it just made a bad situation worse. I had to go to call the police and have them take my dad away. When the police came, my mom was crying. My dad, when they took him away, was crying and saying, 'What are you doing? How can you do this to me?'"[192]

DA, who had been five years old at the time of the incident said, "I remember SNA phoning the police to get my dad out of the house. I think he was only seven or eight years old. He had to do that. I remember him physically steering me away, telling me things.

"He told me, 'Let us go in the room and play. Come on!' He never wanted to play with me. That time he really wanted me to go in my room and we would play. I remember he convinced me because he said, 'Come on, I will sit here with your dolls. We will have a tea party.'

"And I was like, 'Wooo!' [Laughter]

"We had the little table and chairs. He followed me and he got me going there. Then he left because he wanted to see what was happening, he had to make sure everything was okay. I would go to the door and he would say, 'No, no, no. Do not follow me. Come on. Come and sit down. I am just getting this and I am just getting that.' We would sit back down and we would start playing. As soon as I started playing on my own, he would be gone.

"That was the time when he called the cops on my dad. That is my strongest memory of actually seeing the violence. I will never forget the look in my dad's face, the look in his eyes, and the fear in my mom's voice. The look on her face because she hit him with a green wine bottle and there was red wine in it. They were sitting in a circle on the floor with some other friends. I do not know how it started or what they were up to but I just remember my mom turning to him and hitting him with that bottle. He was looking at her and she hit him with it. Then there was red all over from the wine and the smashed bottle. After it smashed, he was still sitting there, just staring at her.

"He did not even blink an eye and then I knew, 'Oh no!' That was when my brother took me to the room and I did not see much more. I saw a little bit of it because I kept going out but the majority of it he was right there. He was watching me. My uncle got involved that time. He was so intoxicated, he did not even realise what he was doing and he ended up fighting my mom too. She was in the closet; they were kicking her, then my uncle snapped out of it and took my dad off."[193]

WA continued, "We went to the women's shelter; the kids hated it there. Everybody was under such stress and such tension. The kids wanted to go home and they kept saying, 'Dad will not do it again, Mom.' I said, 'You guys go to school, and I will go home. When you finish school you can come home, and I will be at home.' I went home; HA had come home when he got out of jail that morning. I came home and the house was clean. He had done all his laundry. He was going to go out to work; he was leaving. My response was, 'Yeah, whatever.' He went; he looked for a job but did not find a job. He was not gone that long when came back again."[194]

Mental breakdown: Time to change

Then WA reached a point of mental breakdown, and then she began her incremental movement to mental stabilisation. "One day, I was baking bread. I got the bread all ready. As I was doing it, I remember thinking, 'I have got to get out of here.' I was wearing blue jeans. I had ten dollars in my pocket. I asked NA to let the bread rise and then stick it in the oven. I had to get out of there. I walked out of the house and started going toward the river. HA tried to stop me. He took my purse away from me, and I just kept right on walking. I guess he figured without my purse and my cigarettes I would not go anywhere. I remember walking on the sidewalk and him driving along beside me in this little station wagon. He was telling me to get in the car but I would not.

"'Where are you going?' HA asked. I would not answer. 'Get in the car,' I would not answer. He drove up in front of me, stopped, came out, and I just kept walking.

"Most of the time I would not answer, but when HA stopped and he was walking in front of me, I kept repeating, 'No.' I remember looking at him and saying, 'Get out of my way, because you are not going to stop me.' I was aware that he was there and I was quite aware that I was walking down the street, that it was a Sunday morning and that it was a nice day. I was just going and I was headed towards the river but I do not know if that meant anything or if it was just because we lived close by.

"I remember HA saying, 'Get in the car. Let me take you somewhere, wherever you want to go I will take you, just get in the car.' I got in the car and he said, 'Where do you want to go?'

"I said, 'I do not know' because I really did not.

"HA pleaded, 'If I can get somebody for you to talk to, will you talk to somebody?'

"I thought I could. 'Yeah.' I ended up talking to a Sister who worked with the Catholic Family Services. It was a Sunday afternoon and I must have spent most of the day talking to her. I remember an office and the whole afternoon seemed to disappear. I remember her phoning doctors and phoning the hospitals. I guess she was trying to get me admitted to the Psych Unit or get me in for observation. She could not get me in anywhere. She talked to HA for a while and she talked to me for a long time. I really do not remember what we talked about; I probably was telling her what was going on. The only thing she could get was an appointment with the doctor the next day.

"I remember her saying to me, 'Can you go home tonight and stay home, and go see the doctor tomorrow at two o'clock?'

"I answered, 'Yeah, I can do that.' It was a suicide contract. The next day, I went to the doctor that she had arranged for me to see. He spent forty-five minutes with me, talking to me, finding out what my history was, what had been going on. At the end of the forty-five minutes, he told me that he was going to put me on Lithium. I had to go back a week later and he was going to take blood to see what my level was. Then he would increase it or decrease it, whatever was necessary. After I was on the Lithium about ten or eleven days, it started to kick in and I could feel myself stabilizing. I started to feel a little more normal and I started to realize that I had to do something. I was still drinking but not as much."[195]

Doing something about me

WA talked about making the decision to stop drinking. She said, "I went out drinking with my cousin on March 31, 1979. We went to the bar and I took off my wedding rings. I took them off, and my plan was to get drunk, pick up some guy, and get laid. I was going to show HA what it felt like to be on the other side of the coin. That was all I could think of, getting even. HA's cousin would not leave me alone that whole night. We were drinking in the bar in the Continental Hotel. We were playing pool and my cousin was watching me like a hawk. I remember going back to her place when the bar closed and her taking me home. Usually we would go to her place and then I would walk home but this night she said, 'No, I will take you home tonight. You had better go straight home because you are pretty drunk.' We went to my place, dropped me off, and then she went home. I do not know how the kids got home. She must have sent the kids home or we picked the kids up."[196]

WA continued, "I remember lying down and I remember going to sleep. When I woke up in the morning, it was very clear that I had to stop it. When I had sobered up at sixteen, because I had gained some self respect in the three months I was in the psychiatric hospital in Brandon,[197] one of the things I promised myself was I was never again going to go down that far. I had lost my self-respect because of the things that I had done before I went into Brandon. I remember coming out of Brandon and if I got anything out of that three months in Brandon, it was, 'I cannot do that anymore. I have some self-respect. I like myself; I respect myself enough, and I cannot do that.' I woke up that morning, and I thought 'I am doing to me what I swore I would never do.' That was a line I promised myself I would never cross again. And it did not matter, at that point, what HA did, where he went, who he was with, or what was going on, I knew that I was crazy and I had to do something about me. That was when I had my last drink; I never drank after that.

"The next Monday, I phoned Calder. They had the two-week spouse program at that time. I remember asking, telling them that I wanted to go into the spouse program. It was easy; I did an intake over the phone and they gave me a date. They told me to come in right after Easter. I was booked to go in. Somehow I knew that I wanted to be an inpatient and that I needed to be away from everything and from everybody.[198]

"On Tuesday, HA wanted to go to the job employment office. He figured if he could just get a job, then life would be better. The job employment office had a job bank, a board full of cards, each with a different job on it. I found this card for a job as a Certified Nursing Assistant at Larson House, the Detox Centre in Saskatoon. I was not even clear on what a Detox Centre was, but I applied. That night, I went to an Al-Anon[199] meeting at Calder. I consider that one my first real meeting even though I had previously been to two in Flin Flon. It amazed me as I listened to everybody talk; it just blew my mind. Everybody said what I was thinking. The next day, I got a call from the director of Larson House, wanting to interview me for the job at there. He offered me the job. 'Come in, do six shifts as orientation. Go to Calder, and then you can start full time after you get out of Calder,' he said.[200]

Getting some understanding

WA recalled, "I did the two weeks spouse program at Calder. It was just light bulbs going on all over the place. Just amazing. So many things started to make sense. My big question was always, 'Why is this happening? Why? Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?' I found out that it was because of alcoholism; that was the only answer. I realised that was the only answer I was ever going to get so I had better learn about alcoholism. I learned."[201]

When WA was in Calder Centre, she set a boundary with HA. She explained, "I had not been there that long when HA was calling and putting pressure on me. I do not know about what he was upset. I remember saying to him, 'I need this time for me and I am going to take it. If this is how you are going to talk to me and this is how you are going to support me, then do not bother me. I will not come home this weekend. If I have to stay here to take care of myself, I will.' Then I hung up on him. That was something I had never been able to do."[202]

After attending Calder Centre as a client, she began immediately working at a Detox Centre as a nurse. WA received emotional support from her supervisor after HA checked himself into the Detox Centre, and then checked himself out. "I talked to the staff supervisor. He helped me understand that HA had made a decision that had nothing to do with me. I was getting some understanding about letting go and about not being responsible for other people's behaviours and other people's feelings."[203]

She went to Al-Anon meetings and learned to look at the violence differently. She began to examine her part in them. She remembered, "It was not about the severity of the assault; it was about breaking the cycle that was going. My part was that I was power struggling all the time. I was constantly trying to figure out what I could do to make him change. If he was getting angry, I knew what buttons to push to make him blow up. So that, rather than dealing with issues head on, I could be in charge and playing the games, doing the passive-aggressive stuff, using the silent treatment. All of those old behaviours all contributed to the violence. Those were some of the things I realized that I needed to change. I had to start looking at my behaviour in any given situation, whatever it was, and ask, 'Am I trying to manipulate this person? Am I trying to create a reaction?' I had to recognise that there is no healthy manipulation unless you are a chiropractor manipulating a joint. Part of it, too, was realising that I was attracted to an alcoholic and that I got into a relationship with an alcoholic for a reason. There were things in my upbringing that made me a perfect fit. If I did not want to be a perfect fit for an alcoholic then I had to look at my behaviours. I had to look at what some of my beliefs were, what some of my values were, what some of my behaviours were. Then, I had to take it from there."[204]

Al-Anon meetings taught WA how not to react to HA. With this tool, WA gradually stopped the words and actions that were her part in a pattern of communication between two people that results in violence, sometimes called *the dance of violence.* "The whole thing around detachment and letting go was another step. Every time I achieved any piece of what was suggested through Al-Anon, it was very affirming because I would think, 'These are tools that I can use.' I also began using other Al-Anon tools such as saying what I meant, owning my feelings, and not using blaming or shaming language."[205]

WA talked about a spiritual experience. She said, "One of the other things I remember from that time period was going to bed one night and just bawling my eyes out. I remember saying, 'God, why does love have to hurt so much?' That night I dreamed of being held in very loving arms, and I knew then that love does not hurt. I woke up in the morning transformed by the experience; I saw things happen in a way that were not my doing. A spiritual foundation was being laid. Once I had a foundation to rest on, then I was able to start rebuilding. It started getting better."[206]

Back home in Sandy Bay

WA's children understood that Al-Anon was now a part of her life, but there was still violence. She recalled, "The kids were supportive of me going to meetings. 'Is it meeting day, Mom? Who is going to baby sit, Mom?' They worried about it. HA was not that supportive. I can remember running up the steps to escape a fist. I was going to a meeting and he was staying home to take care of the kids. He was going to hit me, and I just kind of scooted up the steps and went anyway.[207]

"Things got much better," WA continued. "Then the kids wanted to go home to Sandy Bay. I remember struggling with that, and then, I realised that I wanted to. We did; we moved back. HA, the kids, the dog, and I lived in the Child Care Centre, and we took care of whatever kids were in there. We were house parents during the week. We went home on the weekends. Meanwhile HA stayed sober for about two months, and started drinking again at Christmas: his last drunk. He drank from Christmas until the end of March 1980, and I stayed out of his way."[208]

SNA remembered HA's relapse in Sandy Bay, "After we moved to Sandy Bay in that year, I do not remember a lot of violence. I just remember my dad walking around town selling things to buy booze. He was carrying foam mattresses, car batteries, and stuff like that from the warehouse that he could sell so he could drink, a common practice in Sandy Bay. When a guy wants to get drunk, he will sell little pieces of stuff to keep going."[209]

WA described two incidences that signalled the end of HA's drinking. "I watched him. His head was down, his jacket was open, his arms were hanging at his side, and his hair was hanging down. The path was not wide enough for him. I remember standing there and saying out loud, 'God, he cannot stay like this much longer. He cannot live like this. Either take him or sober him up, but put him out of his misery, one way or the other, whatever you have to do, do it because he cannot live this way much longer.' I remember feeling peace after that prayer even though it would not have taken much for him to die. Physically, I could see the late stages of alcoholism: the blotching, the sagging skin, the dull lifeless hair, no muscle tone, and distended abdomen."[210]

WA talked about HA's decision to quit drinking. She said, "I am not taking away any of the credit for him sobering up but I think one of the things that made it possible was that there was that change. We were no longer locked in that power struggle."[211]

WA was active in Al-Anon in Sandy Bay. Occasionally, she would drive to Flin Flon and attend a meeting there, and then bring back her newly acquired knowledge to the Sandy Bay Al-Anon meeting. NR remembered, "I became friends with WA after I got married and began to work up here. I would go to Al-Anon meetings with her once a week. We did a lot of sharing, and we enjoyed it. WA was a good person to know because she was very strong in what she believed. I respected her and I learned a lot from her. HA and WA had a lot of problems, but she worked well with them."[212]

After a time, WA realised that her words and actions were not causing the violence. She had stopped contributing to it and was refusing to accept it. When HA assaulted her again, she charged him to let him know that she was no longer going to accept the violence. HA's decision to quit drinking coincided with his going to court for assaulting her, and receiving a fine and a year's probation.

WA continued, "His last incident of violence against me while drinking and what preceded him quitting was that I laid charges against him. I was working at the cafe and he came in. He had been drinking for quite a while; I had been in Al-Anon for almost a year. He came in and asked me for something. I said, 'No.' He picked up a sugar dispenser and threw it at me. It scraped my neck as it whizzed by so I had a scratch. I took the kids, hitchhiked to Pelican Narrows because Sandy Bay did not have police, went into the police station, and I told them I wanted to lay an assault charge. I wanted them to take a photograph of the mark. They did. I made a statement, told them what had happened and that I wanted him charged, and that I was going to Flin Flon for a couple days until he sobered up. When I went back to Sandy Bay, I went to the house. I said, 'I just came to tell you that I did report you to the police and I did lay an assault charge. Because I will not be hit, I am not going to live with that anymore. You need to know that the police will be coming to see you.' Then I left."[213]

HA recalled, "I needed to change. I thought that I could change but I did not want to because I figured, 'I am the problem so I am going to do away with the problem and then it will be good for everybody else.' That did not work. I tried suicide a couple of times, once with a gun, and once by setting the house on fire. It failed each time because I was so far down under the influence of alcohol that I could not even do that right. It never ceases to amaze me how DA took the gun and put it away without it going off and that DA was the one that came in and put the fire out."

DA recalled stopping a fire, "There was one time when my dad was still drinking in the house in Wabash Bay[214] and I was eight years old. I think my mom had already quit drinking, He was still drinking, and I was there with him. He was passed out and she was gone. We had an ironing board and the iron was plugged in and shut off but it was melting. It had shorted out. I could not wake up my dad. I had to take care of it myself. When I think about it now it was so crazy because I tried to wake him up, but he would not get up so I figured I would do it myself. It had already burned through the ironing board and it was making smoulders on the floor. I wrapped my hand.

"Typical kid, 'If it is hot, then you combat it with cold.' I wrapped my hand up in wet tea towels and then one dry one over top and I pulled out the plug. I am so lucky I survived that because now I know you do not do that. That is not the way. Mom came home and all hell broke loose because of what happened. I think it was right after that my dad quit drinking. It was not long after. I remember him telling me he was not going to drink any more. It was not long after I remember him telling me that he was not going to drink any more that he quit drinking."[215]

WA recalled an incident with a gun, "While waiting for treatment, the village hired him to shoot dogs for one day. He had a twenty-six ounce bottle of whiskey and he was cruising around in the back of the truck, shooting dogs, and he was mad at me because I had reported him and laid charges. I had to go around and pay bills, walking to three or four different places. As I was walking, I was thinking, 'God, you had better take care of me because I cannot do anything about him, and I also cannot be terrorised. I have to do what I have to do.' So I was walking around, paying bills, and he was drunk and cruising the community with a gun. When I got home that day he was sitting at the kitchen table. He had on a white fisherman knit sweater; there was blood all down the front of it. The bottle was sitting there and the gun was propped up against the wall. I walked in the house. I was all by myself, the kids were still in school and I stood there but I do not remember being particularly afraid. He had pointed a gun at me once, years before that so I knew that he was capable of it. I stood there, looked, and I realized that he was passed out, that this was not a set up. I did not know what the blood was from, maybe from one of the dogs he had shot or maybe he had gotten into a fight. I took the gun, went next door, and told my neighbour, 'I am going to put this gun in the basement in your husband's work shop. Get him to check it when he gets home because I do not even know if it is loaded.'

"HA came to later, hid the bottle, and locked the door. Then my neighbour phoned me, and said that the gun had been loaded but jammed. The blood, I heard later, was there because he had gotten into a fight with somebody; they had punched him in the nose and his nose had bled over his shirt. To this day, I do not know if the gun had jammed before he came home and propped it up there, or if he had tried to shoot himself and it jammed. I have no clue."[216]

HA's changing did not occur in a vacuum. Not only were other people from Sandy Bay becoming sober but also WA had taken a one-hundred eighty degree turn in her life path. Beginning about one year earlier, WA made the decision to quit drinking alcohol, went into a treatment centre to begin looking at her problems, began attending Al-Anon meetings regularly, and began working with others afflicted with alcoholism. She was beginning to think and act differently. DA remembered that the noticeable changes in their family came after WA decided that she was no longer going to take part in the violence, while WA noted that HA's changing was partly in response to the changes that she had made.

DA recalled that the change in her parent's lives came after her mother began standing her ground. She said, "I do not remember a specific time, a specific year, or a significant event to cause a turn around. The only conclusion I can come to about why the violence stopped or how it stopped, I give a lot of credit to my mom when she put her foot down. She finally figured out for herself or for us, I do not know who she did it for, but she figured out it was not good. It was not right."[217]

Hitting bottom

HA recalled, "I hit bottom. Everything was in turmoil. The family, the work, nothing was working. I realised that there was something that had to change. That something had to be me. I more or less admitted that I was helpless. I was sincere. I gave my all to the All-Mighty Power. 'Help me change. Help me make a difference in how I do things, how I treat people, how I accept things.' That is the difference. I gave myself to the Higher Power."[218] HA continued, "For me, it was about hitting bottom and the violence that went with it. I was a dangerous person when I was drinking. I would fight physically and viciously. People did not like what they saw.[219]

"I wanted to live; I did not want to die. I figured, 'There has got to be a reason. Maybe there is a reason why I have to be around longer.' I talked to the alcohol and drug counsellor.[220] He said that he would phone around to see if there was anyplace where I could go. He found a place in The Pas, Manitoba, Rosaire House. He said he would take me down there if I wanted to go. I finally decided to go one morning. I poured a bottle of whiskey into a thermos and I drank it on the way down. By the time we got there I was drunk. They checked me in.[221]

"I got the *DTs*.[222] I was seeing things. I was in bad shape. I would try to go to sleep and I would hear people partying. I could tell exactly who was at that party. I could hear the pour of the drink, the music, and the laughter. I would get up and check to see who all was there. There was nobody there. I thought, 'I must be going crazy.' Then I got scared.

"When I was vulnerable, an old man would show up and say, 'You are coming with me.' I never went with him. I guess if I would have gone with him, I would have died. I was that close. Why did he ask me to go with him? He only showed up when I was at my weakest. He was going to take me away. It was surprising. I had never seen him before and I have never seen him since that time. I guess I was that close to death a lot of times.

"This guy from Grand Rapids[223] kept checking on me all the time. Three or four days after I got there, I told him I was leaving and he asked, 'Why?'

"I answered, 'I cannot hack it here.' I was shaking, I was puking, and I was hearing things.

"He said, 'You know, I was like that when I come here. Stay.'

"I thought, 'I will give it another day.' I started not feeling crazy and not being embarrassed. I got to meet a few other people and talked to a few of them. They would come and talk to me. It started to feel a little bit better. I was still sick from the alcohol withdrawals. I could not eat anything solid, just liquids. My whole system was way out of whack. My stomach shrunk. I was not really hungry. I found out that there was a lot of coffee there and every now and then there would be a donut or a banana. I would take that. I do not know how long I was there before I started to realise that I could stay. I could finish the program. I did not have to leave because it started to feel safe. It was good for me there. It was better than being outside.

"I really did not have to do anything but follow the program, which was good. I talked to the different counsellors there and then they assigned me to one counsellor. He was really good for me. He understood the problems I had. He really spent a lot of time with me and that was good because I got to understand myself, and understand my problems a bit more. I started to feel remorse about some of the things that I had done. I started to get feelings back.

"After about two weeks, two and one-half weeks, I got to be part of the programming and part of pretty well everything in there because I felt good. I wanted to live. I did not want to die. I got the chance to phone home, to talk to WA and the kids. It was good. They came out once to visit me. Being in there that long and feeling good about the place, I did not really want to leave. I got my thirty-one days.

"I hitchhiked back. All the other times that I quit drinking, WA knew that I would not quit drinking. She told me that. But that time, the last time that I went home, I was a totally different person from before. She knew that this time it was real. After that, things started to change. It was really, really good for a long time."[224]

A couple of degrees less

SNA recalled the time that his dad quit drinking, "I remember my ten-year-old mind thinking, 'That will be the end of all this stuff,' because by that time I had begun to associate the alcohol use with violence. It seemed to be tied together. Even at my age it was obvious. I figured that because the alcohol use was over, the violence was finished. I also was aware of how a person can change when they drink. I had seen that in my dad. The dad that I knew when he was sober and the one that I knew when he was drunk were very different, so I knew that could happen."

SNA continued, "The violence was not completely over; there were things that happened in the years that followed where there was violent behaviour. He did not hit her, but he forcibly removed her from somewhere, which is a couple degrees less. I remember my dad physically taking my mom out of the Child Care Centre when I was twelve or thirteen. He hauled her out, threw her in the truck, and took off. That was the last time I remember anything that was aggressive to the point of physical contact. After that, I have an impression of my dad getting older and changing his behaviour and of my mom calming down. Their relationship did not necessarily get better in terms of peace and serenity but it did get better in terms of violence. There was no more throwing stuff around, no more hollering in the house."[225]

While HA was on probation, he slapped WA and she reported the violation of his probation order. WA explained, "The first time that he hit me after he was put on probation was out of frustration. I had been invited to go to Cumberland House. Several of us were flying down. He did not think I should. He was angry with me, and I said, 'I am going. There is nothing wrong with what I am doing. You are home to take care of the kids. I am not abandoning our children; they have a parent who is available to take care of them for the day. It is a business trip.' He slapped me, and I told him that I was going to report it. I said, 'This house is not big enough for you and me and your anger. If you are not leaving and I am not leaving then I guess it is your anger that is going to have to go. I am going to report this to your probation officer because it is not going to happen anymore.' I had no problem stating that. I had no problem going and making the phone call. I still went ahead and did what I was going to do."[226]

Changing beliefs

The law had changed. Larger fines, jail sentences, and probation orders were being given out to those convicted of spousal assaults. HA, who had a deep respect for the law, understood that now there would be negative consequences to hitting WA. "Nowadays, you get charged for doing that." Gradually, he changed his belief regarding appropriate behaviour. Initially, HA believed that the *woman was less*. Later, his belief changed to 'it is not right to beat your wife.' HA recalled, "Later on, I started to realise that you do not do that. After going to jail a couple of times for doing something that I thought was right, I soon learned not to do that. I accepted that new teaching because I never did think it was right to beat on your wife. It is not right to beat somebody. What gives you the right to do that? That is wrong."[227]

Changes continued to occur over the years. WA recalled HA going back to treatment for a follow-up program. She remembered, "I had taken the kids on a holiday. HA wanted to run away from home and he had been trying to get me into a fight so that I would throw him out. I did not. My plan was, there was a family reunion in Edmonton and I was taking the kids to that. I took the kids and we went to Edmonton, had a wonderful time. We came back and he was sleeping. He grabbed me and he held onto me for the longest time. When he let go, he said, 'I phoned Calder and I am going in. I cannot live like this.' I knew that he had not been drinking because there was no evidence of drinking; there was nothing missing. He told me that he had phoned Calder and he had arranged to go in because he was having difficulty with his life. He was going in for treatment.

"He was in there for three weeks. When he came back, he told me that he had been trying to get me in a fight so that I would throw him out. If he could get me into a fight then I would get mad. I would throw him out, and then he could justify going to Vancouver and abandoning his family. Otherwise, he could not justify it. I had not taken the bait. I had no idea what he had been up to. He could not get me to fight with him. When he came out of Calder he said, 'I have to start going to AA meetings.' It lasted maybe a month. He quit going to meetings when he got into politics. He started being on village council and getting involved with his job, with the Group Home. I do not remember any outbursts of frustration. There were issues that we argued about but I do not remember anything in particular."[228]

SNA remembered, "When I was thirteen, in either the late summer or the fall of 1983, I walked into my mom and dad's bedroom and my dad was the only one at home. Everybody else was gone for some reason. My mom was probably working. My dad's suitcase was on the bed and it was packed. I was blown away. He walked into the room and I remember he said, 'There you have it.' That meant, 'I am leaving.' I freaked out and cried. I remember he changed his mind and he decided that he was not going to go. I was totally aware that it was because of my reaction that he decided to stay.'

"It was still far from a peaceful home; there was still all this stuff that happened. I remember going to Jan Lake;[229] it was really tense then. I must have been fourteen or fifteen because my mom and dad ran a Group Home around that time. It was all the kids, all the Group Home people, the families, the four of us, and my foster brothers and sister. When you look at the pictures now, you can tell that my parents were miserable. I remember that it was some kind of special occasion because there were gifts and stuff exchanged. I cannot remember if it was my dad's birthday or my mom's or Father's Day or whatever, but it was not a grand old time. They were probably doing it for us or maybe it was just business as usual."[230]

FD met this family during the year prior to HA's becoming sober and then became close friends in the years after. FD said, "I do not remember seeing HA hit WA. I am not saying that it did not happen but it did not happen when I was around. There were some verbal threats when he was wild and when he would be yelling and screaming. I think that she knew that that was just the anger. When a person is angry, sometimes they say a lot of things that they do not mean. From what I saw, she was just allowing it to pass over because it had happened so many times. She might have been afraid but she never mentioned it. She did not show signs of fear."[231]

Constant functional separation

When HA's father died, WA moved to Prince Albert to further her education. She said, "Before his dad died, I had wanted to leave; I had started that in about 1983 and I wanted to go. I wanted to get the kids out of there, because I did not like the education that they were getting. I said to HA, 'I would like them to get a decent education. They are not going to get it here.'

"HA said, 'I cannot leave my mom and dad.' And then, 'I cannot leave; my dad is too sick and if we leave my mom is going to leave him.' There was always a reason why we could not go. In 1985, he lived in Saskatoon with SNA for one semester. I was ready for a separation because I was so sick of some of the stuff that was going on. Instead, he moved out and took SNA with him so that SNA would have somebody to live with when he went to Saskatoon. We kind of sidestepped the whole issue there. I do not remember any physical violence; I do not remember any terrorism or any threats of violence at that time. After his dad passed away in 1987, his dad's death gave me permission to leave. I left in 1988 to go back to school. He did not want to come so I moved to Prince Albert and then he started to commute."[232]

SNA said, "When my grandfather passed away, my dad said to my mom, 'You can go now.' I do not think I fully understand that. There was something about how she had to make a big sacrifice to move to Sandy Bay and to stay there. Once my grandfather passed on, then a part what my dad needed my mom there for did not exist anymore so he said she could go. That was a big turning point for them because she moved to Prince Albert shortly thereafter and that was the beginning of the period of their constant functional separation, where he would live in one place and she would live in another."[233]

During HA's visits in Prince Albert, the violence stopped. WA continued to be afraid of him, however. She explained, "I lived in Prince Albert from 1988 to 1991, and there was one episode there, where we got into an argument. I cringed from HA and that really got him mad because he said, 'I am not going to hit you. I have not hit you for a long time and I am not going to hit you now.' It was an automatic reaction. I could feel the tension building and when he came towards me, I automatically backed off. There was one episode in La Ronge. We were arguing; he came towards me and I pulled back. He got mad because I was cringing from him and he was not going to hit me. He said, 'I have not hit you. Look, it has been a long, long time. I do not do that anymore. Why are you cringing?' There was still that little bit of fear. I had done it a couple of times, where he would be really mad at me and he got right in my face and I just backed off. Then he said, 'Why are you doing that, I am not going to hit you. I have not hit you for a long time.' The instinct was automatic."[234]

A fundamental change

WA remembered a dramatic change. "In 1993, HA had heart surgery. He received awareness the first time he got out of bed, went over to the window, and looked outside. He got an appreciation for life and he realized how much of his life he had wasted. Then, he remembered being sexually abused by a priest as a child. From the way he talked about the abuse, he never remembered it until after his surgery. He had been home about a week when he told me about it. That is when the memories surfaced and he told me the story. After he remembered the abuse and told me the story, I saw a fundamental change in him. As he regained his strength after the surgery and started to resume his normal activities, there was something different about him. I cannot put my finger on it, but he was a changed person.

"He spent time writing it out, in the form of a letter to the Bishop, telling the Bishop what had happened and wanting to find out where his priest was because he wanted to confront him. He talked to his peers, trying to get them to talk about it, and most of them would not. He never did. I suggested that he see somebody; I think he did see a counsellor once or twice, but that was it.

"I understood the rage blackouts when he told me about his being sexually abused as a child. I had twice seen him black out and beat someone up. Both times the guy that he beat up had invaded his personal space. Both times, the guy come into our home and had refused to leave when HA asked him to. Both times, there was a clear violation of his personhood. Both times the guy had barged into our home without being invited and then had refused to leave. Both times he beat them up. Both times he said that he did not remember the assault. Both times, it was when he saw the blood, and saw the guy on the floor that he realised that he must have been on the tear."[235]

HA recalled that time. He said, "The sexual abuse[236] was another factor that plays a big part in my being who I was. I am not making excuses for who and what I was, but it is very important. I do not think much about it anymore because I have dealt with it. It played a big part in clogging up my mind because subconsciously it was both there and not there. Every now and then it would come about that something had happened. It was sort of like in a dream, but it was not a dream; it was the real thing. I think the anger that I carried played a big part of who I turned out to be from a young man to a raging bull when I started drinking. I did not really know what it was, but sometimes you wake up from a dream and you think back, 'Hey, it did happen.' But then it goes away again because you do not want it around. That could have played a part in my anger, the combination of that and the other things triggering it, like a disease is triggered. Certain things trigger cancer. Certain things trigger diabetes. The sexual abuse was the disease that I had that I did not deal with for a long time. Once I dealt with it, then it was a thing of the past. Before that, I more or less accepted it, but I never dealt with it. 'It has to be dealt with sometimes,' I said later."[237]

Breaking the old rules

Many acts of marital violence happen in secret, and they are kept strictly secret, in keeping with an old saying, "You do not wash your dirty underwear in public." As children, both HA and WA had learned to keep family secrets. When they married and formed their own family, the restrictive message or injunction, *Do not talk* was unspoken but strictly adhered to.[238]

SNA talked about the injunction in WA's family, where the *Do not talk* rule was so strictly enforced that he did not know about his grandmother's drug use until one year before she died. The same rule was adhered to in HA's family of origin as told by NA's hatchet story. LA, BA, FD, and NR reiterated that the notion of *Do not talk* was strictly established in HA and WA's home.

SNA said, "I learned from my mom a lot about the stiff upper lip, the whole British thing which she must have learned from her mom. So on her side there is the stiff upper lip, which is very much a part of the British thing. On my dad's side, it is the tough northern man thing, which is, 'You do not show your emotions.' I learned a lot about that. I am not sure whether it is related to violence, but it is very much a part of the environment of keeping your emotions in check. 'Do not let them get too far away. Do not show them too much.' Part of the game when you are in a dysfunctional situation that has overtones of abuse to it, is that you put a good face on everything. When you have something like violence in your home, it becomes this little secret that you do not want to share with anybody. Keeping your emotions in check and holding your cards close to your chest are very much in keeping with that. They work well together. You do not show your emotions, you do not let anything out. You have this little secret about this terrible thing that happens at home, and you do not share that with anybody. So, there is a relationship between something hurtful happening at home and everyone not letting anyone know about what is happening."[239]

The *Do not talk* injunction was strictly adhered to in HA's family as well. NA told the story of how her mother (HA's sister) NA to uphold that injunction by giving her another injunction, 'Do not see what you see.' NA recalled, "My mother went after one of her brothers or uncles with a hatchet and she just about nailed him in the back. The hatchet got stuck in the doorway and she was trying to pull it out. When she was trying to pull it out, it came out, whacked her in the head, and she fell on the floor. Everybody thought she was dead. I remember sitting there looking at her, just watching that big goose-egg on her forehead. My brother and sister were crying so I took care of them, changed their diapers, and fed them while I watched my mom. When drunks came by I said, 'No, you cannot drink here, she is out.' I said, 'The police are coming. There is somebody coming,' so nobody would come and bother us. Then when she sobered up, she cleaned the house and I would ask how she was feeling; 'Well, there is nothing wrong with me, what are you talking about? Why do you make up such lies? You are such a story teller.'"

NA continued, "Then I would start thinking, 'Well, maybe this did not happen.' I could see the hole where the hatchet was, I could see the thing on her forehead, and I could see the stacks of beer bottles in the back room. But maybe it did not happen.

"When the family got together, we knew that there was going to be a drunk and there was going to be violence so all us kids would take off. We had little forts that we would go. I found out that there were forts all over the place so kids would be safe when people were drinking. We would go to these forts, we would talk about what was going on inside and a couple of times we walked in and everything was busted. We would try and sneak something to feed ourselves. We would fall asleep in those places and one of my uncles and an older aunt would come get us. And everything would be like nothing happened. There would be big holes in the walls, there would be people with black eyes, stitches, and somebody had their arm or their wrist broken once.

"They said, 'Nothing happened. What is wrong with you kids? You have a place to sleep, what is wrong with you?' This was from my grandfather, this was from my mother, this was from my uncles. We could not believe what we saw, we could not believe what we heard, we were just making things up, and that was all of us. All of us kids were lying. If somebody was molesting us, we were lying. What made the molestation worse was if this person was giving drinks to the family then we were definitely lying. We were the ones that were the problem; not the person that was trying to rape us in our sleep. That is why we would sleep together because if somebody would try to come and assault us, there were enough of us to fight back. But we were lying when that happened. I think that was the hardest thing to deal with.

"We grew up basically not believing adults and knowing that adults would hurt us one way or another. Part of our getting our power back was to talk to each other, to whoever would listen because none of the adults would believe us."[240]

In the same family, LA talked about HA being violent to all around him, with the *Do not talk* rule being strictly adhered to by all. No one in either the family of origin or the nuclear family said anything at all about the violence. LA said, "Looking back on it, HA was always a violent person, not just toward WA but toward everybody around him. When he was sober, he acted like nothing ever happened. Nobody would say anything when they were sober. There were a lot of things being left unsaid along with things not being talked about."[241] BA witnessed the violence in his HA and WA's relationship but said nothing. BA recalled, "When they stayed with us, I saw all of this violence and HA going drinking with different people, making money, and leaving his family. The same thing happened that had happened with fishing. He would go and make money, then go drinking and leave his family. Then he would be okay for a little while, and then start drinking. I knew about the violence with WA, but what could I do? That is what I thought. I did not interfere very much; I did not bother with him in that respect, but I knew that it happened."[242] The violence was not visible to others. NR said, "During the ten years that I lived across the street from HA, I never saw him be violent to WA."[243]

The *Do not talk* injunction was practised in HA and WA's home after they both became sober. FD said, "HA would get really angry and he would scream and holler and shout, and then it seemed that after he blew up it would kind of go away. I do not think he held a resentment once he screamed and hollered and got it out. When he did that, nobody said anything."[244] There also seemed to be a lack of loving concern. FD continued, "I do not know what their relationship was like when I was not around. But I did not really see all that much loving concern. When you see two people, a man and wife, a lot of times they will show their affection even in front of other people. I did not see that much of it. I am not saying he did not love her, and I am not saying she did not love him. I just did not see that kind of interaction. That could be because he was away so much. I do not even remember HA taking a bush radio.[245] He might have, but I cannot remember if he did. But there seemed to be a lack of intimacy between the two of them. Different people have different ways of showing love and affection. They had been together a long time, so maybe there was that kind of understanding between them."[246]

HA's 1993 heart attack precipitated his breaking the *Do not talk* injunction. Before the heart attack, he did not remember that he had been sexually abused as a child. After the heart attack, he told WA about the abuse, wrote about it in his journal, talked to others in his community who he knew had also been abused, talked to a counsellor, and talked to the Bishop. He broke the *Do not talk* injunction. Today, HA writes about the events of his life. HA said, "I like to write, put stuff on paper, and then study it later. When I finish, it makes a lot of sense. I do my chores and then I sit down and write what I think and what I see so I can relate back to it later. When I see or hear something a little bit different, I go back and think, 'I was wrong here; I have to fix this one.'"[247] He continues to be active politically, and readily tries to help those who come to him for help. He said, "Now I go to Southend, to Deschambault,[248] to Pelican Narrows, to Prince Albert, to Saskatoon, and to Vancouver to have these meetings. People listen to me when I speak, because I have something to offer. When Lorne Calvert[249] was here in Pelican Narrows, I was invited to speak. The Chief[250] invited me, saying, 'I want you to do a presentation.' I put a presentation together on trying to resolve the long-standing issue of compensation for the community of Sandy Bay.[251] I presented it to the Premier and his colleagues."[252]

HA today

HA recalled, "WA and I argued for years and we fought a few times before we got married. It was always when we were drinking. For us, it did not get to be a regular thing because we did not fight constantly. It never got to the point where somebody was about to get killed. It never got to the point where I got the shotgun and hit her over the head, or where she hit me over the head. It was a fight. It did not happen all the time. I could probably say that it happened maybe ten times since our relationship started. She tried being violent too. I ended up in jail a couple of times during the fights over the violence, but not for two months, or six months or a year. The only amount of time I spent in jail was basically overnight. I was just thrown in there to sober up and behave myself. "[253]

SNA recognised, "My dad is from Sandy Bay. He has his roots there. He feels a sense of connection there that is partly born of the land and partly of the circumstances of the people in Sandy Bay. My dad's heart is about helping the people of Sandy Bay; that is his motivation. But it does not help him. Instead, it makes things a lot worse for him. Because as strong a person as he is and as much will as he has, it is not enough to survive the circumstances of his environment. His political leanings or his leadership tendencies play a big part in his desire to help people. His desire to help finds its manifestation in political activism: doing things for other people as mayor, councillor, or advisor. He has done all those things now. He is now an elder; that is a big thing. His need to be present in Sandy Bay is probably hard for my mom, because she is not from there. She does not have that need to be present. Her life is different; it is about something else. Their relationship is about reconciling those two things. It has to be difficult and maybe even impossible. They are still working at it."

HA said, "The legacy that I am leaving behind is that I was bad and then changed towards good. There are always two sides to a story. I leave nothing out; not just tell the good side. I like to be telling the truth, not trying to hide anything. If I was part of that bad thing, then I was part of it. I have nothing to hide."

He continued, "To the people that care to listen, I strongly suggest to be yourself. You have got to understand yourself; know who you are. Do not let anybody tell you otherwise. We are who we are. I am a grass-roots person. I am a Cree Aboriginal person before I am treaty. I cannot change who I am. The only thing that I can change is how I deal with people.

"For me, tapering off from being the bad guy to being to the better guy, not necessarily the good guy but a whole lot better guy, was that I learned to have patience. I never had patience before. I learned to have patience, a lot of patience. I have looked at everything from different angles. I wanted to get from the bad to the good, to change it and make things positive instead of negative. I thought, 'The best thing to do is to try it at home, and start with it at home, and see how things could change at home.' I would like to talk across the table and say, 'This is how I feel. This is what I think.' But I am not going to argue about it. Nowadays, I try to talk to somebody who wants to argue or fight over something. I usually try to negotiate, to be diplomatic about the process and not get hysterical. I try not to get into a screaming match with a person that has got a problem because that does not resolve it; it only adds more fuel to the fire. That is another way of dealing with myself. That is how I have learned to deal with going from being a really bad person to trying to be a good person. I have come to the point where, if you want to fight me, I will turn around and walk away. I will try and talk to you, and if I fail in trying to talk to you, I am just going to turn around and walk away and leave you. I do not want to fight you. I do not need to fight you. When someone is trying to control me I get frustrated and I go in my hole and I do not come out. You can say whatever you want; you can do whatever you want. I am dug in, I am not going there. That is how I deal with it."[254]

HA talks to people who support him. He spends time with his mother daily, and talks to others who support him. He said, "I treat my mother good, and I love her very much because I have learned so much from her. Today I am still learning from her because I take the time to go and sit with her, listen to her, and be patient enough to hear what she is saying. She understands me or tries to understand me and we get along. We have our ups and downs. We have our arguments too, now and then, but nothing to a point where she is going to stay mad at me for six months or a year. We get into some hairy discussion about something, and then it is gone. That is the kind of relationship we have."[255]

HA also spends time with other friends. He said, "I talked to my friend from Flin Flon not that long ago. She said she wanted me to go and spend some time with her, but with all the things happening, I cannot right now. But I am going to have to make time and spend a day or two or three with her because the last time we talked was about a month ago. She said, 'We need to talk.' We need to sit down, we need to talk, and we need to share a lot of the things. Over the years, we have shared a lot of the things. We talked about a lot of the things. We helped each other. Whenever she needed help, I helped her. And when I needed help, she helped me out."[256]

WA today

When WA finished her classes in Prince Albert, she moved to La Ronge. Eventually, she began working in the addictions field, where she is still employed. Her relationship with HA got better, and then it got worse. The commuting portion of their relationship lasted nearly twenty years. During the final parts of the data collection of this research, WA applied for and got a divorce. LA said, "I just heard that she filed for divorce. 'She should have done that twenty-five, thirty years ago,' I thought."[257] HA disagreed with divorce. He said, "I look back at my parents and other people in this community. They made things work. Things were tough but they were willing to make this thing work. There was never any such thing as a divorce coming to the minds of people because divorce is wrong; it is devil's work. It is wrong because they gave their word and I guess their word was worth a lot. If you tell me that this is going to be, then that is the way it is going to be. Nothing is going to change that. I learned that from the old people, like my mother. She talked a lot about the way things were and I could remember seeing how things were. She never gave up. She tried and she tried and she tried and then things kind of came to a point where she said, 'Alright, you are like this now. Okay,' and there was more or less a unit from there."[258]

In both her life and her work, WA now shares her experiences with others so as to benefit them. She confided, "What I say to women now is in order to break the cycle; you need to recognize the part you play. The cycle of violence has two handles and two hands, and you need to take your hand off. You need to stop spinning it yourself; you need to stop contributing to it. That was a key factor for me being able to make changes in my behaviour, then go ahead and pursue laying charges against my husband when he assaulted me. It was not about the severity of the assault; it was about breaking the cycle that was going. My part was that I was power struggling all the time. I was constantly trying to figure out what I could do to make him change. If he was getting angry, I knew what buttons to push to make him blow up so that I could be in charge, playing the games, not dealing with issues head on, doing the passive-aggressive stuff, and using the silent treatment. All of those old behaviours all contributed to it. Those were some of the things I realized that I needed to change."[259]

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[136] HA's story, p. 275

[137] Currie, W., 1969, p. 173

[138] The realities of a First Nations person moving to the city are echoed in Currie's (1969) address at the conference on the Mid Canada Development Corridor. Currie said, "They find in the cities that their education has not prepared them. They have little or no skills for hire; they are even further down the economic totem pole; they are again on welfare; they are unprepared for urban living-living by the clock, paying rent, the impersonality, the high cost of living, the rush, the loss of freedom" (p. 173).

[139] BA's story, pp. 415-418

[140] LA's story, 451

[141] NA 's story, 458

[142] WA's story, 319

[143] WA's story, pp. 319-322

[144] WA's story, p. 321

[145] WA's story, p. 321

[146] WA's story, p. 322

[147] WA's story, p. 322

[148] WA's story, p. 322

[149] WA's story, p. 322

[150] WA's story, p. 322

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[151] SA's story, 433

[152] WA's story, pp. 323-325

[153] LA's story, p. 446

[154] WA's story, pp. 324-326

[155] HA's story, p. 276

[156] DA's story, 392

[157] HA's story, p. 275

[158] DA's story, 392

[159] The eggshell walk refers to a hyper-vigilant method of communication commonly occurring in families where alcoholism or violence is present and where one is careful not to anger the other person in any way. 'Doing the eggshell walk' means that one is careful about what one says, if anything, what tone of voice is used, and what body language is being portrayed. One is careful not to do anything that might cause a violent episode to begin.

[160] NA 's story, p.459

[161] WA's story, pp. 323-325

[162] A doormat is a colloquial term used to describe someone who has no boundaries, and cannot or will not stand up for his/her own basic human rights.

[163] LA's story, p. 452

[164] LA's story, p. 452

[165] SNA's story, p. 366

[166] WA's story, p. 325

[167] HA's story, p. 276

[168] SNA's story, 366

[169] WA's story, p. 325

[170] BA's story, p. 366

[171] WA's story, p. 319

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[172] WA's story, p. 327

[173] MacDonald (2003) asserts that intestinal bypass surgeries were early surgical procedures developed for morbid obesity. They involved the bypass of variable lengths of small intestine to create mal-absorption. The procedure resulted in weight loss but also in serious nutritional and metabolic side effects, some of which were very dangerous. The complications accompanying these surgeries were malnutrition, cirrhosis, liver failure, calcium oxalate renal calculi, and other problems associated with bacterial overgrowth in the bypassed bowel. Later, restrictive operations were developed to limit intake rather than cause mal-absorption. Evolution of gastric bypass and development of other modifications of purely restrictive procedures has continued to date. No general agreement as to the optimal procedure has been reached, if one does exist for any given morbidly obese patient.

[174] WA's story, pp. 327-329

[175] WA's story, pp. 328-330

[176] NRs' story, p. 498

[177] Valley Comfort was the brand name of a coal or wood-burning free-standing stove used to heat buildings. A more energy-efficient version of the stove continues to be available to consumers.

[178] WA's story, pp. 329-331

[179] WA's story, p. 332

[180] The Dalkon Shield was an intrauterine contraceptive device that was introduced on the market in 1970, widely used, then recalled in 1975 when ten Dalkon Shield users became pregnant with it intact, then died. Used as a contraceptive by preventing the implantation of a fertilised egg, it was a plastic device that looked like a round bug with one large eye and five legs on each side. It had a unique tail: not a single filament, but many fibres wound together and enclosed in a sheath. It was this string that was credited to transporting the bacteria from the bacteria-laden vagina to the bacteria-free uterus, resulting in septic abortions and death (Health Square, 2006).

[181] D and C is the common term used for dilatation and curettage, a medical procedure whereby the cervix is first anesthetised, then widened, allowing insertion of a curette into the uterus. The curette is used to scrape away any placental tissue remaining after a spontaneous abortion. (World Book Encyclopedia,1980)

[182] WA's story, pp. 276-278

[183] WA's story, pp. 337-339

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[184] NA 's story, 458

[185] The truck had a standard rather than an automatic transmission.

[186] Also known as Highway 106, the Hanson Lake Road is 360 kilometres in length. It was named the Hanson Lake Road after Olaf Hanson, a veteran trapper, prospector, and outdoorsman who helped to determine its route from Smeaton to Creighton through large masses of muskeg, rivers, lakes, and rock outcroppings. There are very few gas stations along the road (Saskatchewan Tourism, Historic Site Sign).

[187] The junction refers to the junction of Highways 106 and 135.

[188] The distance between the junction of Highway 135 and the first gas station, Bloomfield's Ballantyne Bay Resort, is approximately seventy kilometres.

[189] The Calder spouse program addresses the issues that arise from living with a family member who has an alcohol or other drug problem that can result in its own pathology (Calder Centre Program Description, 2004, p. 5)

[190] WA's story, pp. 341-343

[191] WA's story, pp. 343-345

[192] SNA's story, p. 367

[193] DA's story, p. 392-394

[194] WA's story, pp. 341-343

[195] WA's story, pp. 351-353

[196] WA's story, p. 349

[197] A teenager, she was committed to the psychiatric hospital in Brandon by her parents and family doctor, who were worried about the risky life-style that she was engaging in. At that time, in that location, there were no other places to access help for her. They discharged her after three months and a thirty-pound weight loss.

[198] WA's story, pp. 349-351

[199] The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. They believe alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery. Al-Anon is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization, or institution; does not engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes. There are no dues

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for membership. Al-Anon is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions. Al-Anon has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. They do this by practicing the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic (Al-Anon Family Groups, 1992).

[200] WA's story, pp. 349-351

[201] WA's story, p. 351

[202] WA's story, pp. 351-353

[203] WA's story, p. 351

[204] WA's story, p. 362

[205] WA's story, p. 353

[206] WA's story, p. 353

[207] WA's story, p. 353

[208] WA's story, p. 355

[209] SNA's story, p. 367

[210] WA's story, p. 355

[211] WA's story, p. 361

[212] NRs' story, p. 497

[213] WA's story, p. 353

[214] Wabush Bay is an area in the town of Sandy Bay.

[215] DA's story, pp. 399-401

[216] WA's story, pp. 355-357

[217] DA's story, p. 398

[218] HA's story, pp. 285-287

[219] HA's story, p. 290

[220] HA's story, pp. 285-287

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[221] Bell, Montoya, Richard, and Dayton (1998) found that in an addictions program intake counsellors reported that clients admitted to an inpatient centre were much more often intoxicated at the time of intake than were clients at the outpatient program. This suggested that those seeking treatment at the outpatient program had completed a self-directed recovery process prior to seeking treatment (p. 563).

[222] DTs, a colloquial expression for delirium tremens, is an acute episode of at least two of the following changes in the nervous system: mental confusion, abnormal perception (errors of interpretation, hallucinations), disruption of the sleep-wake cycle, increase or decrease in psychomotor activity, temporo-spatial disorientation, non-recognition of close family and friends, memory problems, epilepsy, generalized convulsive seizures delirium that is usually caused by rapid withdrawal or abstinence from alcohol following habitual excessive drinking. Delirium tremens usually appears 18 to 96 hours after discontinuation of alcohol consumption (Orange County Drug Treatment, 2006).

[223] Grand Rapids is 265 kms north of Winnipeg on Highway 6. Situated on the northwest shore of Lake Winnipeg, it is 160 kms southeast of The Pas.

[224] HA's story, pp. 286-288

[225] SNA's story, pp. 367-369

[226] WA's story, p. 361

[227] HA's story, p. 280

[228] WA's story, pp. 362-364

[229] Jan Lake is a resort located on the shore of Jan Lake, 80 kilometres northeast of Flin Flon on Highway 135 (AAA Saskatchewan map, 1998).

[230] SNA's story, pp. 368-370

[231] FD's story, p. 486

[232] WA's story, p. 358

[233] SNA's story, pp. 374-376

[234] WA's story, pp. 368-370

[235] WA's story, pp. 361-363

[236] HA talked about being sexually abused in the church as a young boy by the Catholic Priest. His memory of the abuse surfaced after awakening from heart surgery. He wrote about the memories, and then contacted the Bishop of the

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Diocese, but the Priest had passed away. He attempted to get other men in the community to come forward and disclose their own abuse by the same person, but was unable to convince anyone to do so (Field notes, January 25, 2005).

[237] HA's story, p. 302

[238] Goulding & Goulding ,1976, pp. 41-42

[239] SNA's story, pp. 380-382

[240] NA 's story, pp. 465-467

[241] LA's story, pp. 446-448

[242] BA's story, p. 412

[243] NRs' story, p. 497

[244] FD's story, p, 485-487

[245] Bush radio, or mobile radio was a system of communication whereby the person out on the land took a transistor radio with them. People wishing to communicate with that person then sent a message to their local radio dispatcher, who transmitted the message, usually at a certain time of day. All who were listening to the radio could hear the message.

[246] FD's story, p. 486

[247] HA's story, p. 310

[248] Located on the shore of Deschambault Lake, Deschambault is one of the eight communities that make up the Peter Ballantyne First Nation. Accessible from Highway 106, it is located twenty kilometres north on the Highway 911.

[249] Lorne Calvert is Premier of Saskatchewan.

[250] The Chief of the Peter Ballantyne Band, Ron Michel, relies on HA's expertise as Chair of the Impact Committee (Field Notes, January 25, 2005).

[251] After completion of the Island Falls dam, acres of the best fur-trapping and hunting land were flooded without permission from the Aboriginal people. The water of Sandy Bay became polluted; the mud sturgeon as a species was all but wiped out; houses, gardens, boats disappeared or were damaged, and ducks, geese, bird of all kinds chose a different migration path. The people of Sandy bay are fighting for compensation (Siggins, 2005, pp. 86-88; Field Notes, January, 2005).

[252] HA's story, p. 313

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[253] HA's story, p. 276

[254] HA's story, pp. 298-300

[255] HA's story, p. 313

[256] HA's story, p. 310

[257] LA's story, pp. 453-455

[258] HA's story, p. 275

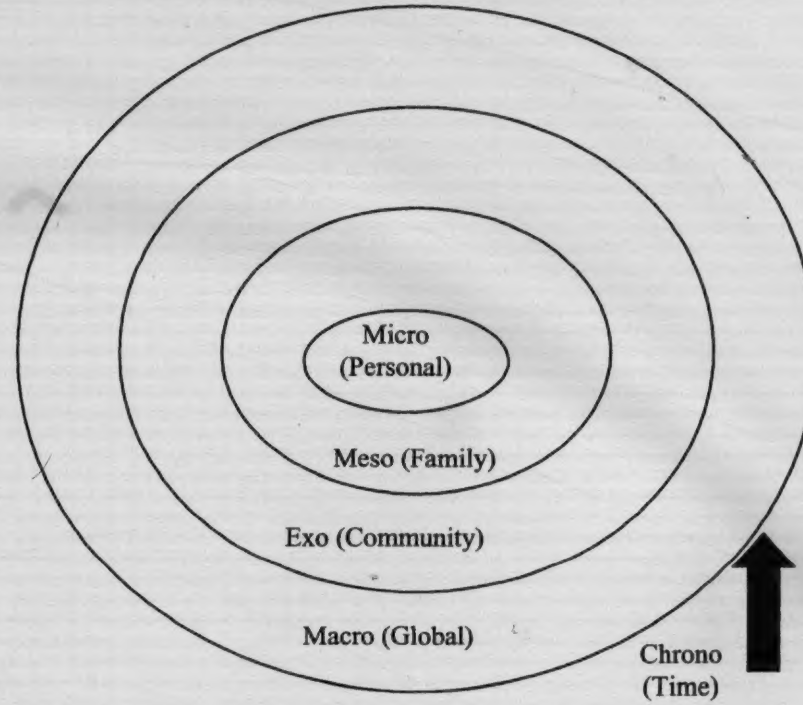
[259] WA's story, pp. 362-364

Chapter 8: Patterns in the dark: Why did it happen that way?

What happened in this family and community? How did the violence start, and when did it end? How did the family move from being violent and living with violence in their home to healing and living in positive change? What were the events that took place? In this chapter, I will systematically address these questions, often with some ideas and still more questions that make us think of the intricate linkages between the micro, meso, exo, and macro levels of human interaction.

I use Human Ecology theory to interpret how the individuals made sense of their lives.

Figure 3: Human Ecology Theory Model



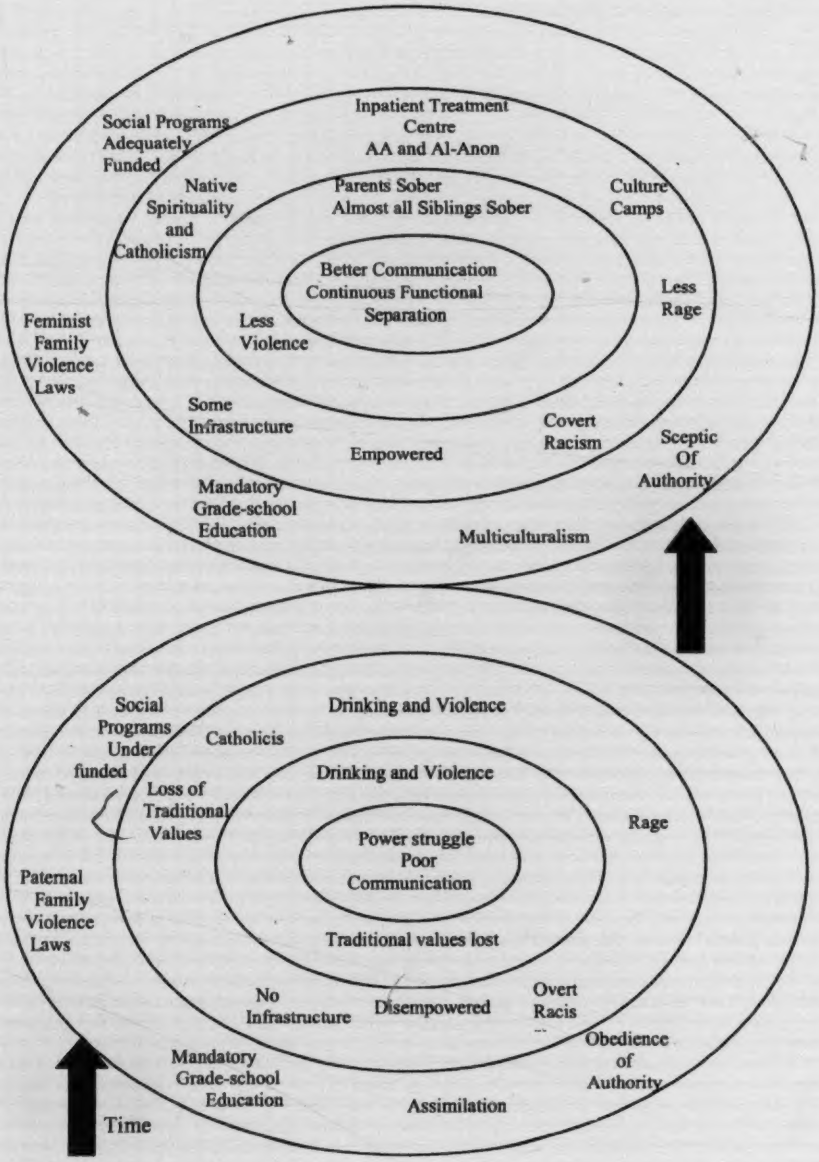

Social Programs Adequately Funded
Inpatient Treatment Centre
AA and Al-Anon
Native Spirituality and Catholicism
Parents Sober
Almost all Siblings Sober
Culture Camps
Better Communication
Continuous Functional Separation
Less Rage
Feminist Family Violence Laws
Less Violence
Some Infrastructure
Covert Racism
Sceptic Of Authority
Empowered
Mandatory Grade-school Education
Multiculturalism
Social Programs Under funded
Catholicis
Drinking and Violence
Drinking and Violence
Loss of Traditional Values
Rage
Power struggle
Poor Communication
Paternal Family Violence Laws
Traditional values lost
No Infrastructure
Disempowered
Overt Racis
Obedience of Authority
Mandatory Grade-school Education
Assimilation
Time

Figure 4: Healing Model

In Figure 3, above, I diagrammed the healing story of this family, their extended family, their community, and their country as they moved from a raging violent relationship (shown in the bottom spheres) to the healthier non-violent relationship (top spheres). Through time, a system that flowed forward through each of the other systems, changes happened in each of the micro, meso, exo, and macro systems. In the microsystem, HA and WA moved from a constant power struggle and poor communication to better communication and a constant functional separation. HA's extended family was reported to have moved from drinking, violence, and a loss of their traditional values to sobriety for both parents and almost all siblings. The stories concurred that the changes were accompanied by less violence in the extended family, and a following of Christianity and Native spirituality. The community (mesosystem) also became healthier. It started out as a disempowered predominantly Catholic community with no infrastructure, facing overt racism, collectively raging and violent, with a loss of traditional values and a rash of drinking. The community healing movement led to an empowered community with the opening of an Inpatient Treatment Centre, AA and Al-Anon meetings, culture camps to counter the loss of traditional values, some infrastructure such as year-round road access, prominent Catholicism and Native Spirituality.

Changes also occurred in the macrosystem. In the 1960s, social programs were underfunded, and family violence laws were paternalistic. The government had a policy of assimilation of the Aboriginal people into mainstream society, and mandatory grade-school education. People obeyed authority. During that time in HA and WA's family, the violence lessened and then stopped, the family violence laws had changed, social programs were adequately funded, and the government had incorporated multiculturalism and mandatory grade-school education as its policies. During this period of rapid social change, the youth of North America rioted in the streets, fighting established authority. The changes in each of the systems affected the other systems. Therefore, the changes in the intimate relationship of HA and WA affected their family, their community, and in aggregate form, their country. Similarly, the changes in the laws, values, and norms of the nation affected the communities, and the families of the nation. The collective narratives of obedience to authority were part of their undoing. The collective narratives of disobedience were empowering and healing.

The roots of violence

In order to understand healing from marital violence, we need to know where that violence came from, the roots of the violence. In general, violence has its roots in people. Human beings are all capable of physical violence; it is possible to be violent to ourselves, to other people, to animals, plants, or objects that surround us. When violence occurs regularly in a family, there is a family epidemic. There are episodes of violent outbursts in any society. When it occurs regularly, however, there is a societal epidemic. In this study, violence was rooted in the families of both HA and WA in terms of their pattern of communication. The violence in the intimate dyad occurred in episodes over a period of about twenty years. Circumstances, trauma, and alcoholism helped to perpetuate the violence. The prevalence of violence in the people of the community of Sandy Bay may have been strongly influenced by their history of having been collectively violated by the dominant society. Collectively, the theme of the people's narrative was powerlessness from cessation of violence.

The roots of violence in Sandy Bay

The collective narrative of honouring elders and authority as well as respecting collective points of view harmed the people of Sandy Bay. Sandy Bay was a community inundated with family violence from the earliest recollections of the participants of this study (HA's story, p. 274; BA's story, p. 411). The Woodlands Cree people's stories showed how they were raised to honour their elders (NRs' story, p. 497), as well as others in authority (BA's story, p. 419, HA's story, p. 253). Because they were brought up within the culture that was based upon collectivity, i.e., to suppress their personal wishes or desires for the good of the community, they assumed that the people who were building the Island Falls dam and power plant were also doing it for the collective good. Siggins (2005) recorded many atrocities that accompanied the building of the Island Falls Dam and Power Plant in 1929 and that were committed against the people of Sandy Bay including one atrocity that HA continues to fight; the people of the community of Sandy Bay lost their fishing, hunting, and trapping area and have to date received no compensation for it. Forty years later, the same kinds of atrocities continued to be carried out on other northern Manitoba communities. In his address to the 1969 Mid-Canada Development Conference, the President of the Indian-Eskimo Association, Walter Currie said, "Too much and too often we forget people and how they may suffer for the sake of material or environmental change as dictated by big business. To illustrate this, I quote a Manitoba hydro spokesman who said: 'For the sake of seventy-seven Indian families at South Indian Lake, should we create a situation where Hydro rates must be increased for the entire province?' And I say yes, if we live in a democracy which recognises the rights of the individual. If we live in that kind of a democracy, how dare one weigh the self-sufficiency, the freedom, the happiness of seventy-seven families, a total of six hundred sixty people against a few lousy bucks? What is to be done must be done to serve people" (p. 39). The collective narrative of honouring elders and respecting collective points of view harmed them.

The kinds of atrocities committed against the people of Sandy Bay were called collective violence by Suárez-Orozco and Robben (2000) because their efficient and systematised acts were meant to destroy groups of people (p. 2). However, the assimilation policy of the Canadian government of the time was not instilled to murder the Aboriginal people. The underlying assumption of the assimilation policy was that there was something lacking with Aboriginal people. The assimilation policy was meant to change the culture and basic nature of the Aboriginal person to the culture and nature of the non-Aboriginal person. The policy did not succeed; it did not change the basic nature of Aboriginal people. It merely succeeded in frustrating them. The Aboriginal people felt the frustration of the oppressed.

The atrocities committed on the Aboriginal people by non-Aboriginal people may have instigated the deep-rooted violence in Sandy Bay. Moulton (1971) stated that a chief underlying cause of the violence of the oppressed is their frustration. "Oppressed people become frustrated or acutely discontented because of the sense of moral outrage: one should be able to attain a better lot in the light of the conviction that inadequate progress is being made" (p. 4). The inter-personal violence in the community of Sandy Bay may be one of the results of the collective violence that was committed on them during colonisation as illustrated by BA in his recollection that follows:

> Everywhere the society was rich. Here I am, supposedly on my land through the treaties, and I have nothing. I got very, very angry so I thought of violence toward society at that point. I did not plan anything, but what overcame that thought was my love for my wife and children (BA's story).

In summary, the roots of violence in Sandy Bay were understood by HA and his family as having stemmed from the atrocities committed on the people of Sandy Bay from its inception as the village inhabited by Aboriginal people who were unable, because of their race, to live in the privileged village of Island Falls. The flooding of the hunting grounds that had sustained Aboriginal people's lives and families for generations with no compensation for doing so, as well as the destroying of the fish in the Sandy Bay area of the Churchill River added to the collective rage, as did the racism and oppression of the government assimilation policy. The disempowerment of the Aboriginal people through their history was perhaps the basis of the collective rage, a root of the violence in the community.

HA's roots of violence

The roots of violence in HA were multi-faceted: a personality that was described in the stories of family members as controlling, aggressive, or having leadership qualities. He experienced frustration as the result of loss of control of his environment, forced relocation, forced entry into the wage economy, acceptance of family violence as the norm, patriarchal values and role expectations, and miscommunication. In his story, he talked about how, in later years after a health crisis, he remembered being sexually abused as a child and how that memory helped him to understand his previous raging. WA's coincidental miscommunication, role expectations, attempts to establish some personal power in a dysfunctional relationship, and continuing to stay apparently added to the violence. The communication injunction of "Do not talk" influenced the violence; the family became a system which was closed to outside help. The stories told of extended family members who were disengaged, did not know, or would not interfere in the violence. The family lived in a community that was experiencing an aggregate frustration as the result of forced relocation, racism, and loss of pride. Family violence was modelled by most families.

The contrasting narratives of violence as part of temperament and violence as a matter of choice explained HA's violence. WA and BA's stories described HA's personality as one that enabled him to be violent. His brother described HA's aggression as *control,* noted that it had begun during HA's hunting and fishing days (BA's story, p. 412), and that the trait continued as his now being described as loud and demanding (BA's story, p. 415). WA said, that as he grew older, HA became more like his mother, GA (WA's story, p. 319). His personality may have been either the result of a learned behaviour as proposed by Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman (1994) and Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980), or a matter of choice. HA's mother was aggressive (BA's story, p. 411). LA ascribed the tendency toward violence in his family to be a matter of choice, saying that "you could go one way or the other."(LA's story, p. 450). Of the eight siblings, HA and two siblings were noted to be violently aggressive, while the remaining five were passive (LA's story, p. 451). HA's overuse of alcohol seemed to overcome any inhibitions he had against hitting WA. He believed that women had a lesser role (HA's story, p. 275). When he was drinking he seemed to use his fists to resolve his marital conflicts.

HA's mother's style of parenting him as an early child may also have contributed to his learning to using violence to solve his problems. His mother spent many of her formative years in a residential school where she was militantly parented (BA's story, p. 412). Just as social learning theory would suggest (Bandura, 1977), because she received harsh discipline in her strict, almost military upbringing (BA's story, p. 412; HA's story, p. 279), she learned that physical violence could be used to change the behaviour of others (Simons, Lin, and Gordon, 1998) while not learning alternative non-violent conflict resolution skills (Straus and Yodanis, 1996). In his marriage, HA may have been behaving in the very same way that he was parented by his mother, 'You do, or you are going to get' (HA's story, p. 279).

One root of HA's rage may have been the loss of control over his life and of his immediate environment. A government policy of mandatory school attendance, along with sparse local population and no local school forced his parents to choose between giving up their children i.e., sending them to residential school, and giving up their livelihood i.e., moving into Sandy Bay and beginning to rely on public assistance for their survival. They chose to give up their livelihood. HA was a youth, no longer required to attend school at the time that they were forced to make that choice. He was not old enough, however, to leave his parents' home. In order to continue living with his parents, he too was forced to leave the bush. In order to keep their families together while their children attended school, the entire community was forced to move from the bush into town. When he moved into town, he found that many of the skills that he had already perfected were no longer utilised or recognised (HA's story, p. 275). His new environment determined that he needed to join the wage economy to earn a livelihood. He had lost control of his environment. He lost his livelihood when he moved into town because he could not make a living in town by trapping, hunting, and fishing. Although hunting, trapping and fishing could continue to supplement his income derived in the wage economy, these activities could no longer sustain him. Losing control of both his environment and primary means of living was frustrating. HA's frustration at the loss of his livelihood and the control of his environment along with adapting to living in a community where drinking may have been a precursor to more drinking. BA linked HA's being taken from the trap line with his drinking (BA's story, p. 424). Drinking led to lack of inhibitions in a young man who had a personality with leadership qualities and lived in a community where violence was common and visible. It is not at all surprising that HA would fight his way into being the leader.

The community narrative suggested that the roots of violence were oppression and alcoholism; the story of this family was a perfect personal example of the community narrative. There were many aspects to HA's frustration and oppression. First, in his forced relocation, a central part of his belief about being able to exert control over his life was shattered. In her account of a forced relocation of Aboriginal people in south-western Alberta, Million (1992) noted that their "involuntary displacement reached inside them and ruptured a very intimate boundary, themselves as a centre of volition" (p. 124). The rupturing of HA's belief in being able to control his life undoubtedly caused him much frustration. A second aspect of HA's frustration may have been his lack of English skills; he suddenly had to learn the language so that he could support himself (HA's story, p. 275). Third, he had no marketable skills at the time that he came to live in Sandy Bay; he had to learn them (HA's story, p. 275). His exceptional hunting ability, a skill that would have made him highly distinguished in traditional society was not marketable in the wage economy. The "lack of marketable skills" (Currie, 1969, pp. 38-39) in a land where others were being able to provide for themselves led to recognisable frustration (BA's story, p. 411). Fourth, he moved into the town of Sandy Bay, a settlement of Aboriginal people described by Siggins (2005) as distinctly rustic when compared to the infrastructure-rich (non-Aboriginal) community of Island Falls. Aboriginal people could work at the Island Falls Dam for fewer benefits than their non-Aboriginal peers, but they could not live in Island Falls, nor use any of the Island Falls facilities (HA's story, p. 274). This caused a tremendous amount of frustration as expressed by HA in his story (Ibid, p. 274).

Another root of HA's rage appears to be the frustration that accompanied his being forced to move from the bush and into town, thereby losing the self-pride and recognition of others as gifted hunter. HA, as a youth, was the second-oldest son. He went hunting and trapping with his father from his earliest days. Early in his life, he had to take over being the main hunter for the family; his father was hospitalised for tuberculosis and his older brother was in ill health. HA assumed tremendous responsibility in his role; a successful hunt provided food for himself and his kin, while an unsuccessful hunt meant that people went hungry until the next successful hunt (BA's story, pp. 418-421). The culture of reciprocity among the Aboriginal people meant that food he brought home was shared among his family and his community. Everyone ate, benefited from his expertise at hunting, and recognised his hunting proficiency (BA's story, p. 424); he could feel proud of his skill. HA received a gift with his skill; he was given the gift of communicating with the animals (HA's story, p. 263). With the gift came a sense of pride: pride in his fortune to have gotten the gift and pride in proper use of that gift (HA's story, pp. 263-266). His move into town where his hunting skills were no longer required or recognised would have resulted in a concomitant loss of pride.

HA's forced entry into the wage economy was a source of his frustration. When his parents relocated to Sandy Bay, their new vocation was to be full-time parents to their children. He left the bush with his parents but had no function in town. There was no work for him there. He left Sandy Bay with nothing more than a willingness to learn a trade and a rudimentary knowledge of the English language. He began working as a labourer in the construction field. Not only had he lost his former home, livelihood, and constant contact with his family, but he had also lost his expected future. He had to survive in the new world into which he had been thrust. The experience must have been frustrating if not fear-provoking.

By observing those close to him, HA learned two things: fir[illegible] that "the woman was less," and second, that to be violent to your spouse was the normal way to behave in a relationship. In his recollections of his youth, he recounted a domestic fight that he had witnessed (HA's story, p. 279). It was during his witnessing of that altercation and others like it including violence between his parents (HA's story, p. 279) that he learned that violence was the way to treat a spouse (HA's story, p. 280). Family members remembered his father being violent to his mother (LA's story, pp. 447-450; Field notes, January 25, 2005) while HA recalled that fights between his parents occurred after they had moved to Sandy Bay (HA's story, pp. 275-278), and that in those fights it was usually his mother who physically attacked his father. As indicated by Athens (2003), HA's exposure to violence in his home and in his community led to him incorporating pro-violent norms and values, which in turn made him violent prone (p. 5). He learned to be violent by watching those around him.

Drinking alcohol in large quantities was a way for the family to deal with the new stressors that they were facing in Sandy Bay. First, drinking alcohol helped them to alleviate the boredom of having little or nothing to do with their time (HA's story, p. 275). Second, drinking alcohol likely helped them to belong to their new community (HA's story, p. 275). In the bush, HA's family drank alcohol occasionally (HA's story, p. 274), but it was frowned upon (BA's story, p. 425). When the family moved to Sandy Bay, however, they moved into a community where the disruption of the traditional Aboriginal culture had erased the taboo about drinking alcohol. Many people, if not most, drank alcohol (HA's story, p. 276). HA's parents began drinking alcohol more regularly to belong to the rest of the community. HA began working in construction, where drinking alcohol was the accepted recreational activity. At first, he drank alcohol to belong to the work crew. Later, it ruined his ability to work (HA's story, p. 275). Third, drinking alcohol and finding oblivion may have helped the family temporarily block out the suddenly salient racism, especially with their close proximity to Island Falls, a progressive non-Aboriginal company community that was sharply contrasted to the lack of infrastructure in the Aboriginal community of Sandy Bay. HA recalled, "But they were superior. That was the way it was set up. They were better, so you had to kiss their feet" (HA's story, p. 269). Fourth, searching for oblivion through alcohol helped them to cope with the hopelessness that accompanied the poverty which was the reality of living on welfare, *being paid to stay home* (HA's story, p. 275). Alcohol, then, became the accepted way of living in the community, as the inhibition eraser, it also became a crucial component in the pro-violent environment.

Some of HA's values and beliefs contributed to the violence. First, HA believed that he was to make the major decisions in the house. The patriarchal system in the home was noticed by the friend (FD's story, p. 486). The patriarchal system also dictated that the rules that WA was to follow were different from the rest of the women in the family and community. Alcohol abuse was common in this family; HA's mother drank (HA's story, pp. 275-278). Yet, one violent episode recalled by WA suggested that although drinking seemed to be okay for other women, HA believed that WA should not drink alcohol (WA's story, p. 343). Second, HA believed that it was wrong to be violent to WA (HA's story, p. 280); his violence to her was committed only during his drinking (SNA's story, p. 366) from which he woke up sick, sober, and sorry (HA's story, p. 283). In his recollections, HA said that he was violent to WA episodically during their marriage but that he could not be violent toward her when he was sober (HA's story, pp. 276-279). NA asserted that his drinking may have been his justification for picking a fight with WA

(NA's story, pp. 459-462). Third, HA disclosed that a personality characteristic that accompanied his drinking and that enabled him to be violent was his selfishness (HA's story, p. 279). He recalled the selfishness as a frame of mind whereby his own wants and needs surpassed the wants and needs of others (HA's story, p. 279). The selfishness, then, was a value that he held. For the time that he held the patriarchal belief in his right to make family decisions and to enforce the distinct roles with WA, there was violence in the family.

The alcohol abuse and violence described by HA co-occurred with the pathological communication patterns. A family communication pattern following Goulding and Goulding's (1976) injunction of *Do not talk* or *Shhh, it is a secret* (pp. 34-38) helped to foster the pathology in the home. An injunction is a negative conduct-governing message given to a child by a parent out of the circumstances of their own pain. If the child accepts the injunction, then it may govern his/her behaviour ever after (pp. 34-35). Examples of injunctions are *Do not talk, Do not see what you see, Do not succeed, Do not think what you think, Do not be the sex that you are, and Do not be alive*, along with many more. The *Do not talk* injunction was held strongly in HA's family of origin as related in NA's hatchet story (NA's story, pp. 487-490). The same communication pattern was prevalent in HA and WA's home (FD's story, p. 486, SNA's story, p. 376, NRs' story, p. 496). During the years that the *Do not talk* rule was adhered to, the violence in the home went unchallenged.

The newly remembered childhood sexual abuse was recounted as a root to HA's violence (HA's story, p. 302). Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman (1994) assert that children who were sexually abused had an increased lifetime risk for substance abuse and any psychiatric disorder. McNally, Clancy, Schacter, and Pitman (2000) corroborate this study and showed that those who had repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse were likely to score higher on clinical scales testing for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), dissociation, pathological dissociation, and depression than those who had remembered their abuse. Another study, a meta-analysis conducted by Orth and Wiland (2006), shows that PTSD among trauma-exposed adults was positively correlated with anger and hostility (p. 705). Forgotten childhood sexual abuse, then, is often associated with psychiatric disorders including substance abuse and PTSD. PTSD is associated with anger and hostility. Thus, alcohol use by a person who was sexually abused as a child but does not remember, if added to an adult trauma, can lead to anger and hostility. Anger and hostility in such an adult who, as a child, accepted pro-violent values can lead to marital violence.

Shame was also a factor in the violence. Gilligan (1996) proposed that violence is derived from shame; violent male criminals responded to a shaming experience with violence. Dutton (1995) found that batterers' feelings of anger are highly correlated with feelings of humiliation and shame. Thus for HA, an experience of anger may have been accompanied by feelings of shame. Because HA had violent tendencies, he responded to shaming experiences with violence, especially when alcohol dissolved his inhibitions.

What happened in this story? For the first twenty-seven years of their relationship, HA did not remember that he had been sexually abused and experienced high levels of anger and hostility (HA's story, p. 302), symptoms of PTSD. When he drank alcohol, he lost his inhibitions and hit WA. When he stopped drinking but did not remember the abuse, he continued to experience a high level of PTSD symptoms. He could no longer justify being violent to WA because he held the value that to hit your wife was wrong (HA's story, p. 282), but the anger and hostility that were a part of his PTSD continued to be pent up within him, and did not stop him from being physically violent especially when something happened that in some way traumatised him (WA's story, p. 358). WA continued to experience a *knee-jerk reaction* of fear during their disagreements even though HA reminded her that he had not hit her for a long time (WA's story, p. 368). When he had a heart attack in his fifties, HA remembered that a priest had sexually abused him as a child (WA's story, p. 362). His remembering and vocalisation of being sexually abused as a child appeared to have abated his PTSD symptoms; his family reported that he became less violent. His memory of the abuse and vocalisation of it became a turning point in HA's personal narrative. He continued to be aggressive in his interactions, but WA reported that the pent-up anger would no longer explode. She was no longer afraid of him (WA's story, p. 362).

There seemed to be no lasting marital consequences for the violence in the family. The violence in this family happened sporadically. It did not happen daily, weekly, or even monthly, but the pattern that occurred followed Walker's (1984) three-phase *cycle of violence* with a tension-building phase, followed by the acute battering incident or explosion, and followed, in turn, by the honeymoon or period of loving contrition.

The cycle of violence started with tension-building. When the tension approached an explosive state, HA would drink alcohol and be violent (WA's story, p. 327). If he did not explode merely by drinking alcohol, then WA would say something to trigger the explosion and thereby release the tension (WA's story, p. 324). After the violent explosion, WA would throw HA out and HA would go willingly because he felt ashamed of having been violent (HA's story, p. 282). HA would stay away for a while, hiding his shame, often by going off to work in the bush. Then he would return, trying to lessen the shame by apologising and making it up to WA and the honeymoon or period of loving contrition would begin. WA was also engaged in the cycle of violence; she talked about feeling bored during the period of loving contrition. Because she was bored, she would allow her husband to come back, and the tension-building phase would begin again (WA's story, p. 326). The cycle would resume. Tension would begin building again, resulting in another explosion and another rest before the cycle resumed yet again. Although the marital couple had separations, they were not lengthy. As long as the communication pattern that kept the marriage intact did not change, the violence continued.

The non-interference of HA's family helped to foster the continuation of the violence. HA's family was aware of the violence; they witnessed it. They had learned to not interfere (BA's story, p. 412; LA's story, pp. 446-449), or to face the consequences of being attacked themselves (NA's story, 458; SA's story, 433). The violence continued.

Until the late 1970s, the law did not interfere with marital violence in any lasting way. WA was advised by the police to protect herself from her husband with a baseball bat (WA's story, pp. 322-325). If the police were notified during a violent incident, they would book HA in jail overnight (HA's story, p. 292). They would then release him. When WA chose to charge her husband after one particularly brutal assault in the early 1970s, the statement that the police read in court was not the one given by WA or the two other adult witnesses. The statement read in court reduced the charge from a premeditated assault to an assault committed in the heat of passion. HA received nothing more than a small fine. By the later 1970s, the law changed substantially. Spousal assault was no longer considered a misdemeanour; it was taken seriously and could result in a criminal charge. The spouse no longer needed to initiate the charge; the police were given the power to do so. When WA reported an assault in the early 1980s, HA received a larger fine and was put on probation. He understood that to assault her again would be to receive a substantial jail term, and he did not want to go to jail. He decided that he could no longer hit WA.

WA's roots of violence

WA recognised that she participated in the violence through each aggressive or violent step that she took, either by becoming violent to her husband or by saying something that triggered an explosion in him (WA's story, p. 328). Where she came from, who she was, and what she did helped to keep her in the dance of violence: disengaged family of origin (LA's story, p. 452), low self-esteem (NA's story, p. 460), miscommunication, and participating in the constant power struggle in the marriage. Her staying showed resilience and strength as well as ability to negotiate and remain attached, as cited in the work of Peled, Eisikovits, Enosh, and Winstock (2000). Other research explains the violent couple's propensity to stay together. Walker (1984) noted that each *honeymoon phase,* the phase after the explosion when the spouses were making promises to each other that the violence would not happen again, brought the hope that the relationship would be better in the future (as cited in Mills, 2003). It seemed plausible that the relationship would get better after the shift in power during the explosion. Foucault's (1990) work confirmed that power never reflects static forms of distribution; rather, it involves the constant shifting of power. WA seldom seemed to initiate the violence, but she acknowledged that she participated in it in by becoming the perfect partner in the dance of violence.

No stories told of WA's family intervening in the violence, in fact they seemed to be minimally involved in her married life, termed *disengaged* by Ingoldsby, Smith and Miller (2004, p. 174). The participants in the study recalled many stories involving HA's family of origin. In contrast, there were very few stories told about WA's distant family of origin. Her extended family lived hundreds of miles away; they were not involved with HA and WA.

Self-esteem is a domain that combines the emotional feelings about the self as well as an evaluation of the person's value or success (Bell, Montoya, Richard, and Dayton, 1998). WA's low self-esteem helped make her a perfect partner in the dance of violence. BA noticed her low self-esteem when he first met her (BA's story, p. 411); she was trying to be someone that she was not. LA and NA noticed WA's low self-esteem (LA's story, p. 452; NA's story, p. 460). In her story, WA acknowledged that low self-esteem was the reason that she entered into the relationship with her husband as well as her reason for overeating (WA's story, p. 327). Her low self-esteem may have been a reason for her irresponsible drinking and consequent confinement in a mental hospital, the equivalent of addictions treatment in northern Manitoba in the mid 1960s. She recalled that her time in the mental hospital was profitable to her. It helped her to make some positive changes; she lost thirty pounds and decided that she would never again compromise her morals (WA's story, p. 349). Her low self-esteem may also have made her the perfect fit in her spousal relationship that was riddled with alcohol abuse and violence (WA's story, p. 361).

WA's lack of good communication skills helped to perpetuate the violence. The violent outbursts were one of the symptoms of the problems in HA and WA's relationship. According to Family Systems Theory, relationship problems are caused by pathological communication (Ingoldsby et al., 2004, p. 171). By definition, communication occurs between two or more people. Successful communication occurs when the message is clearly stated, and when the receiver of the message understands what is stated. Pathological communication occurs if the message is somehow not clearly stated, or if is not understood by the receiver. WA engaged in at least two forms of pathological communication, mystification and indirect communication. *Mystification* is a form of communication in which the speaker denies the reality of a situation by acting as if nothing is wrong or stating that nothing is wrong, when something clearly is (Ingoldsby et al., p 171). We know that WA engaged in mystification because SNA did not know about his maternal grandmother's overuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs until one year before she died (SNA's story, p. 376).

WA engaged in another form of pathological communication, *indirect communication.* One engages in indirect communication by either not stating one's desires or stating them indirectly but expecting the receiver of the communication to fulfil those desires (Ingoldsby et al., p. 171). WA recalled to using indirect communication in her account of *the silent treatment, passive-aggressive communication*, and *not dealing with issues head on* (WA's story, p. 361). WA's use of mystification and indirect communication helped her to become a full participant in the pathological communication that was a part of the violence in the relationship.

According to WA's story, she continued attempting to gain more power in her marital relationship (WA's story, p. 361). Glasser's (1984) control theory lists power as a basic human need, along with love and belonging, freedom, and security. According to this theory, every human needs power. Power can either be fulfilled by attempting to exert power over others, as in attempting to control another person's behaviour, or it can be fulfilled by becoming more powerful within oneself, attaining higher self-esteem or more education. He notes that people marry for love and belonging; but once married, driven by the need for power, they struggle to take control of the relationship (p. 11). WA mentioned the constant power struggle in her relationship with her husband (WA's story, p. 361); both she and her husband vied for more power in the relationship. She attempted to exert power over her husband by engaging in the power struggle and staying engaged for a long time.

The violence that was manifested in this intimate dyad was similar to the violence going on in the rest of the community of Sandy Bay. It was rooted in the collective rage of an oppressed people along with family patterns of shame, low self-esteem and pathological communication. Alcohol abuse helped to explode the rage into violence. Multiple changes had to occur before the violence stopped.

The roots of healing

Healing in the community

Participants recalled the people of the community of Sandy Bay becoming empowered beginning in the late 1960s. They began at a position of learned helplessness, a concept coined by Martin Seligman (1975) to describe situations where people do not attempt to escape abuse. Their empowerment in gaining control of their own destiny helped the community move to a position of beginning to exert power over everything from their life-style choices to their political leaders. Community empowerment came during a number of events that were related by the participants in their stories. The precipitating events were as follows: the closing of the village of Island Falls, the enactment of the DNS, more government money for social programs, and the government's recognition of the social problems in Sandy Bay. Two community crises spurred grassroots empowerment movements. A tragedy began a community-wide movement to quit drinking alcohol, and a community rebellion against authority was successful in mobilising people to organise themselves to effectively promote their own interests at the community and regional level. These events helped to empower the people of Sandy Bay. The empowerment of Sandy Bay helped them heal.

Recognition of the social problems being experienced in the community by the provincial government helped the people of the community of Sandy Bay to be able to begin to trust that the government would help them rebuild themselves as well as their community. The recognition of the social problems in Sandy Bay mobilised the government to send aid to the community. Pawson and Russell (1985) asserted that in the early 1960s, Sandy Bay was identified as having some of the worst social problems in the area. A community development project was planned for Sandy Bay by the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services. In this community development project, social workers flew into the village and stayed for several days at a time, camping in an abandoned house as necessary (pp. 373-374). Community residents met with the government social workers to discuss child protection issues. A local person became the child protection worker. People from the University of Regina's Social Work Program became involved with the local committee in a community development initiative and set up day care services, a group home for older adolescents, foster care, and an alcohol treatment unit. The grassroots involvement in looking after their own child protection issues and setting up the needed community services helped further empower the people of Sandy Bay.

A community tragedy together with the grassroots healing movements of other isolated Canadian Aboriginal communities helped to advance the community healing process. A family in Sandy Bay, parents and several children, were involved in a boating accident. The parents were impaired but were able to swim to shore. Several of their children died. The parents decided that they could no longer drink; they began a grassroots movement of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon Family Groups in the community. People who attended these groups began getting healthier using the program outlined for them by the groups. They quit drinking alcohol. They began talking about their personal problems with people that they could trust. They began to realise that they were not alone. They began to incorporate spiritual living principles into their daily lives.

A community rebellion in 1972 in Sandy Bay was both a root and a manifestation of the increasing empowerment of the people of Sandy Bay. BA recalled listening to a news program in 1972 in which his relatives and others were yelling to get rid of the RCMP in Sandy Bay. The RCMP had put 45 people in an 18 by 18 foot jail cell; the people of Sandy Bay became incensed at the unfairness and rebelled against the RCMP. BA recalled that the rebellion was a low-point for Sandy Bay; after the rebellion, the common cause helped people to begin talking and planning together and to increase cohesion in the community (BA's story, pp. 415-418). This story of the community rebellion showed that the people of Sandy Bay were becoming more empowered to speak for their own rights, and to question established authority. It also was a reason for the community to join together, to mobilise against a common identifiable enemy, authority imposed by the dominant culture.

Later, a change in government policy was ascribed by WA to have begun a downslide in Sandy Bay. Another interpretation was discussed with WA in an informal meeting and deemed incorrect. In this interpretation I thought that the dissolving of the DNS had led directly to the community of Sandy Bay beginning to go on a downslide. WA saw it differently. She said that, in her opinion, the reason for the downslide was the adoption and implementation of Bill C31, which split the community of Sandy Bay into

Status Indians, non-Status Indians, and Métis, whereas previously they had been one entity, Sandy Bay. Where the community had been standing together, looking toward a common aim, it was now compartmentalised, with each faction trying to govern itself. The community unity was lost, and with that loss, began the community downslide.

HA heals

This section will summarise the healing process that HA experienced as supported by the participants' stories.

HA's healing journey has been an incremental process, inextricably connected to the changing Canadian laws, the healing of the community, and the healing of his family. He changed with the birth of his children, and when Canadian law changed to protect the woman in domestic disputes. He attempted to quit drinking alcohol numerous times, with varying lengths of sobriety. In the depths of his drinking, he thought, "Could there be a better life?" During the year after WA quit drinking and started changing the way that she related to him, he sank lower into the alcohol abyss and attempted suicide twice. HA assaulted WA and she charged him. He knew that the law held ultimate authority. He told the judge that he was going to get help for his alcoholism, received a fine and one year's probation. He became sober and returned home. He began to gain a sense of control in his life and began working with troubled youth in a cultural camp, thereby passing on his hunting, fishing, and trapping skills (FD's story, 485). HA continued to rage periodically and slapped WA once during his probationary year. WA reported the assault. When she moved away to attend school, he began commuting between Sandy Bay and her new home. There were two violent episodes. He realised talking was one of his gifts, and began to be politically involved. He had a heart attack and then began talking about having been sexually abused as a child by a priest. He spent a lot of time writing and thinking, and turned the health crisis into a turning point in his experience. He changed his internal view of women. He is now retired, and trying to help others in his community.

According to the family's stories, HA acquired healthier modes of conduct in seven noticeable steps; each step built on the previous one. First, he began decided that he would begin to resolve conflict by reincorporating the traditional ways: talking and listening to others, remembering the stories of his ancestors, and realising that he did not have to spend his life on skid row. Second, HA asked others for help. Third, he quit drinking alcohol and began to learn how to live without the presence of a chemical in his body. Fourth, he began attending meetings where he learned that he was not alone with his problems, and where he learned how he could give back to his community. Fifth, he rethought his views of what was acceptable behaviour toward women, especially, he said, after he had ended up in jail for doing something that he believed to be right (HA's story, p. 276). Then, he recollected that he had never thought that women should have been treated badly, but that he had learned to treat them that way in the community. Sixth, sobriety and all the other changes helped him to once more feel in control of his environment. Seven, a life-threatening health crisis was the catalyst that helped him to decide that he had wasted much of his life. HA and WA's stories recall that his catalyst for change was his remembering a childhood trauma. Most of the participants talked about him taking steps in a healing direction. Shortly afterwards, he no longer expressed the rage with physical aggression directed to his wife.

The first noticeable roots of healing came for HA after the birth of his children. Although he continued to be violent to WA, BA noticed a positive change in him at that time (BA's story, p. 411). He began attending meetings (BA's story, pp. 411-414), thereby signifying the result of his learning the English language. To attend meetings, to understand what people at the meetings were talking about, and to participate in the meetings signified a comfortable working knowledge of the English language. He was healing.

The roots of healing were evident in HA's numerous attempts at becoming abstinent from alcohol. The pattern through which he quit drinking was consistent with the Finney, Moos, and Timko's (1999) study that found that the achievement of total abstinence on the first attempt was rare, and that it was a process (Tucker and Pukish King, 1999, p. 119; Tucker, Vuchinich, and Rippens, 2002) that was most difficult for those who had fewer social and personal resources (Moss and Moos, 2006, pp. 523-524). HA attempted to quit drinking the first time in 1975. He was beginning to lose important personal resources; he was married and employed (HA's story, p. 277) but experiencing more difficulty in his family life (HA's story, p. 298). At the same time, social resources in his home community had increased; the Sandy Bay Inpatient Centre had been operating for approximately two years. The next five years of his life were spent bouncing in and out of sobriety, included two reported suicide attempts, and developing other skills and support systems. Considering the strength of his ties to the community (HA's story, p. 313; WA's story, p. 362; SNA's story, p. 370), the increase of social resources in

Sandy Bay was very important. HA was a part of his community as an active drinker. Between drinking bouts, he would be a part of the activist community: understanding and sustaining current systems, planning local and community growth, and taking action to achieve growth. Then, the new way of living would become overwhelming, and HA would return to the drinking, sometimes until he was physically incapacitated. Then he was able to get and stay sober. He described this time as a major turning point in his life.

HA became personally motivated to change his way of life. In the research, it became very clear that place and historical events were an integral part of the story of healing. Part of HA's worldview was his being Woodlands Cree and his strong identification as custodian of the land. His identification with the land also included a close identification with his ancestors. Through the stories passed on to him beginning in early childhood, the lives of his ancestors became a part of who HA was. I was told stories of HA's ancestors, powerful gifted men who were leaders and shamans. These stories were important to this research because the loss of that power and leadership was a part of HA's early life story when the rage built up inside of him. Telling the stories of his ancestors, the powerful men and women, medicine people at the time, was crucial to include because the stories of his childhood kept hope flickering within his breast. When HA was on skid row in Winnipeg he recalled, "Before I took that first drink in the morning, I would lie there and wonder, 'Why do I do this? Why do I have to be like this?' It always came back to what I had learned as a kid growing up. I had learned, 'You have got to be as good as yourself, you could move the world if you want to. You do not have to let anybody else tell you that you are less, and you do not have to prove yourself to anybody that you are less or better because you need to be yourself. You are a good person, a contributing person.' I grew up being taught that we are all good people. There were better things out there for me if I wanted to get them. I needed to change."[260] The strength and pride of his ancestors provided the impetus to change.

HA's growth was tied to the growth of WA and their family. WA made changes in her life and her self-confidence grew. The family moved to Sandy Bay from Winnipeg and became active members of the community. The power struggle between HA and WA continued; the threat of the violence was always there (WA's story, p. 329). During an extended period of sobriety, HA was drawn to a woman in Winnipeg and began having an affair (WA's story, pp 337-340). He started drinking again. WA continued to change; HA began coming home more often, and then ended the affair. The family moved to Saskatoon. WA hit a bottom, went for co-dependency treatment, and through Al-Anon began learning ways to change her interactions with her husband. HA attended the in-patient treatment program in Sandy Bay and became sober again. The family moved back to Sandy Bay. HA began drinking again, seriously compromising his health (WA's story, p. 361). He related that he had tried to commit suicide by burning down the house but DA stopped the fire (DA's story, pp. 373-374). It was reported that he tried to commit suicide by shooting himself; the gun jammed and WA removed the gun from the house (WA's story, pp. 359-362). HA assaulted WA. She had decided that she would no longer accept abuse from him; she charged him. The charges stuck, and he made the decision to quit drinking for the last time. His decision to quit drinking was closely associated with the changes that WA and their family had made. HA's subsequent growth was also closely tied to WA and their family. While he was in the treatment centre, he was in contact with his family; they supported his recovery from alcoholism by coming to visit him there (HA's story, p. 288). He was happy to return home to them after his treatment was over.

The changes in the laws of the land also played an integral part of HA's healing. WA charged HA twice in their marriage. She first charged him in the early 1970s. That charge led her to being victimised three times. She had been victimised the first time in the assault. She was victimised the second time when the police had presented her story incorrectly to the courts. She was victimised the third time when she heard the coldness in HA's voice after his court appearance was over (WA's story, p. 324). She became frightened at that time, knowing that all this was keeping with the increase of violence in situations of domestic violence where charges are laid, as discussed by Sherman et al. (1992). Her husband could become more violent in response to the arrest (p. 141). When WA charged her husband with assaulting her the second time, the laws had changed and the charges stuck. As discussed by Berk, Campbell, Klap, and Western (1992), this charge became a positive deterrent for HA. He did not want to go to jail; he respected the authority of the law (HA's story, p. 275). He had something to lose by being incarcerated (p. 197). He pleaded guilty to the assault and told the judge that he was going to seek help with his alcoholism (HA's story, p.299). He got a fine and a probation term. His being convicted of assault forced HA to a turning point in his healing.

HA's asking for help was a manifestation of a root of his healing. His telling the judge that he was going to seek help for his alcoholism was a way of him admitting that he needed help. He may have been motivated by either a plea to have his charges reduced or a willingness to stop drinking. Either way, his obtaining help for his alcoholism became a part of his next probation order. His not getting help would have been a breach of his probation order. The breaching of his probation order would have led to more charges, possibly leading to his spending time in jail. I assume that a possible jail term was a deterrent. HA said that after his second suicide attempt failed, he asked the addictions counsellor for help with his alcoholism. He was taken to a treatment centre in a town near Sandy Bay. Because he had expressed a willingness to change by asking for help, he was more willing to accept the help that was offered to him there. He found a counsellor who understood his problems, and began making the internal changes that would help him to continue to be abstinent when he left the treatment centre.

HA's attending meetings was also an indication of his willingness to heal. Some of the meetings that he attended were A.A. or other self-help meetings (FD's story, 485), while other meetings were directed at a community or local cause. HA realised that it had become worthwhile to become involved in local causes. As the community became empowered, he could begin to gain trust in its social institutions and cultural practices. Suárex-Orozco and Robben (2000) noted that large-scale violence and massive trauma disintegrate trust in the social structures that make human life possible (p. 5). Luhrmann (2000) defined trauma as singular or repeated events which injure, some dramatic and soul-destroying and others quiet and humiliating (p. 158). HA's forced move to Sandy Bay, his having to frequently and personally face racism and the results of colonialism were humiliating, and soul-destroying traumas. His attending meetings, then, was a manifestation of his regaining trust. Regaining trust is an act of healing. It involved Suárex-Orozco and Robben's explanation of healing: the reconstruction of trust in the social institutions and cultural practices that structure experience and give meaning to human lives (p. 5).

HA's attendance and participation at meetings led to his realising that he had an oratory gift (BA's story, p. 415), thereby helping to restore his confidence in his abilities. His family reported that his confidence in himself was diminished when he had to leave the bush and set aside his ability to care for his family and community through successful hunts. His realisation that he had an oratory gift helped to restore his confidence in himself and to raise his self-esteem. He realised that he could care for his family and community by exerting a positive influence through his oratory gift. This helped restore his belief in himself as a contributing member of society (HA's story, pp. 285-288). It helped to heal him.

A root of HA's healing was the changing of his internal view of women. When he was a youth, watching the family violence in Sandy Bay, he internalised families as following paternalistic principles (HA's story, p. 280). Those principles were clearly shown in his hitting WA when she remarked that drinking was a good idea (WA's story, p. 341). They were also clearly seen by the friend who had watched the family interact (FD's story, p. 486). His internal views were challenged by the law. He realised that he would be put in jail for beating WA and accepted the new teaching (HA's story, p. 280). His internal views of women were changing.

After he quit drinking, stopped being violent, and became involved in making positive changes in local affairs, HA gained greater control over his environment. The control that he was feeling was adding to his personal well-being. Myers (1993) found that individuals who reported being in control of their lives also reported high levels of happiness and personal well-being. HA was reinforcing his sense of mastery over his environment and his sense of well-being when he began working with troubled youth in a culture camp (FD's story, 485) because he was passing on his skills. Lemme (2006) found that people who maintain control over their lives experience lower levels of stress and are high in subjective well-being. HA attained a better sense of well-being in participating in the worth-while project of teaching the youth traditional skills. Emmons (2003) found that happiness was the usual by-product of participating in worth-while projects (p. 106). Today, HA continues to try to help others in his community (HA's story, p. 292). The greater control over his environment that HA attained after he quit drinking helped restore his sense of personal well-being.

An enlightening event in HA's healing was a heart attack, subsequent surgery, and the early childhood memories that subsequently surfaced. The heart attack was a huge step in HA's healing. When he woke up after the surgery, he got up, went to the window, looked outside, and remarked that he had wasted most of his life until then (WA's story, pp. 361-364). The heart attack was the crisis in HA's life that spurred him on to further healing. Shortly after, HA told WA that he had been sexually abused as a child (WA's story, p. 362). The life-threatening crisis seemed to release the memory of the abuse. Before the crisis, HA described it as if it was a memory that was both there and not there (HA's story, p. 302). After the heart attack, he described the abuse to WA and to others. He also began writing about it, then trying to find others who he was sure had also been abused to come forward and to disclose their abuse. They would not. He tried to find the offending priest; the man had died. He resolved the abuse by talking about it and by writing about it.

In summary, HA's healing was attributed to the birth of his children, his becoming sober, his motivation to change based on what he knew he was capable of, his asking for help, his attending self-help and community meetings, his new view of women, his increased control over his environment, his regaining of a traumatic memory after a life-threatening health crisis, and the change of the laws regarding spousal assault.

WA heals

WA's healing journey was also chronicled in the participants' stories. WA appeared to be an active participant in the violence even when she did not raise a hand. Her family of origin, low self-esteem, pathological communication style, and use of her power in a particular way all contributed to the dance of violence. Several of the participants in the study credited her to having provided the catalyst to stop the violence (DA's story, p. 398; NA's story, p. 460; LA's story, p. 453; WA's story, p. 351). If she was able to provide the catalyst to stop the violence by changing her own story and values, then she had been participating in the violence earlier.

There were nine steps that helped her to stop participating in the violence. First, she became honest with herself; she realised that she was an active participant in the violence in her sixth year of marriage (WA's story, p. 324). Second, she realised what it was that she was doing to trigger the violence. She learned that her part of the dance of violence was trying to control the dynamics in the marriage (WA's story, p. 325). Third, learned how to change what she was doing to trigger the violence. In her seventh year of marriage, she began learning how to do the dance that would keep the violence to a minimum (WA's story, p. 325). Fourth, she realised that it was essential for her to undergo a revolution, and that merely changing some things would not suffice. Her revolution came in her tenth year of marriage when she hit a psychological bottom[261] which she described as realising that she was crazy (WA's story, pp. 349-352). Fifth, she asked for help (WA's story, p. 349). Sixth, she joined a supportive, non-judgemental community of others who had similar difficulties and who were searching for a solution (Jones, 2007). To join the community, she first cloistered herself within an in-patient program for co-dependency, and then regularly attended Al-Anon meetings (WA's story, pp. 351-354). Seventh, she learned how to change her behaviour to stop her participation in the dance (WA's story, p. 353). Eighth, WA took a stand against the violence. She took that stand in her eleventh year of marriage by reporting HA's assault to the police (WA's story, p. 355). Ninth, she reinforced the stand that she had taken previously by charging her husband each time that he hit her. For example, she charged her husband when he slapped her after he was put on probation (WA's story, p. 358).

WA's healing occurred incrementally, covering the span of many years. It was hard to ascertain when it began. The difficulty of trying to decide when such a process started was described by Dara Horn in her account of a teenager's life. "Most of the time, the clay that forms a young person's life is kneaded and prodded slowly, gradually, by him and by others, until a shape is coaxed out of it, and it is only after many years, long after the clay has hardened, that one can go back and trace the polished surface, searching for the fingerprints of those who helped to mould it long ago. But sometimes, often by accident, a dent will be made so deep, in clay just beginning to dry, that no amount of prodding will cover it up again" (Horn, as cited in Jones, 2007). WA acknowledges that her healing is still incomplete and that her healing or growth, like every human being's, will be completed only when she dies.

WA's journey into a healthier lifestyle began with her stay in the psychiatric hospital where she made a decision to respect her sexuality. She decided to leave Sandy Bay when she experienced the problems there. In the city, she went back to school and got an education which would help her get a job to help sustain herself and her family. She realised that she was obese, and decided to have surgery to combat the excess weight. She began realising that she had a problem with co-dependency. She hit a personal bottom, took an antidepressant drug, and accessed help from a treatment program. She started working in the addictions field and began regularly attending Al-Anon meetings. She took more education and began searching for spiritual strength. Today, her self-improvement is guided by her work through helping women overcome their difficulties as well as her through self-help programs

WA's healing had to address patterns of behaviour learned in childhood. Few details of WA's childhood were discussed by the participants of this study, but it seems that her life with her parents was touched by alcoholism. LA saw both her parents as alcoholics; SNA noted his grandmother's addiction (LA's story, p. 451; SNA's story, p. 376). Family System's theory, outlined by Ingoldsby et al. (2004), explained that children in alcoholic or dysfunctional families take on psychological roles such as hero, scapegoat or delinquent, invisible or lost child, and clown. People who take on the role of co-dependent or enabler in their adult families may have had alcoholism in their family of origin; they cover for others and often have psychosomatic symptoms due to repression of emotions (p. 172). WA's role seems to have been the codependent or enabler, the one designated to take care of everyone else. NA talked about WA's role of caretaker to all of HA's family (NA's story, 458), while WA talked about being a good fit to be married to an alcoholic (WA's story, p. 361). Clues of her repressed emotion were given in the form of pictures. One picture shows her as a three-year old in a long dress and hat standing in front of a white house. In the ten years after the first picture, she became heavy; other pictures show her as a heavy teenager and young adult. In the tacos and butter story, WA described her pattern of overeating as a way to repress her emotions (WA's story, p. 327). Her surgery story described her way of dealing with the excess weight that the overeating created (WA's story, pp. 327-330). WA mentioned her increased self-confidence as the result of the post-surgical weight loss (WA's story, p. 332).

WA addressed self-esteem in her life journey. She obtained work training so that she could become self-reliant. She trained first to be a nurse and then took a course in business development, while recently she took training in addictions counselling. The training increased her self-confidence at the same time that it increased her ability to be self-sustaining.

The surgery was a vehicle for WA's learning new relationship patterns, as was a treatment program in Saskatoon, coupled with on-going attendance at Al-Anon. WA learned a new way of relating to her husband after her surgery. When WA's energies were completely focussed on her recovery from the surgery, her husband became sober and stayed that way for more than one year (WA's story, p. 329). In the treatment program, WA learned that alcoholism was the primary problem in her marriage relationship and that she could stand up for herself in the relationship (WA's story, pp. 351-354). In Al-Anon, she learned new patterns of behaviour as a way of relating to her husband and family (WA's story, p. 353). WA learning new ways of relating to others was one of the roots of her healing.

WA hitting a psychological bottom was part of her healing journey. She described her emotional instability that culminated in her husband taking her to see a professional who made an appointment with a doctor and completed a suicide contract[262] with her before she would allow her to leave the office. The next day, the doctor prescribed an antidepressant (WA's story, p. 351-354), and her moods began to stabilise. Her psychological bottom was followed by a realisation that she had to change her way of life (WA's story,

p. 349). Soon after she realised that she needed to change her life, she had her last drunk because she realised that she had nearly broken the promise that she had made to herself years before, that she would never again be morally substandard.

A part of the healing journey for WA was her enrolment in, and completion of, a treatment program for co-dependency. An important aspect of her getting help was her asking for it. WA made the call to the treatment program; she asked for help. She decided to live in the treatment centre for the two week duration of the treatment, and upon reflection, still believes that it was a good decision for her at the time. WA learned a lot in the treatment program. First, she began breaking the injunction of *Do not talk.* She acknowledged that there were problems in her marriage; she began talking about them therefore breaking the pathological communication style of mystification. Others listened to her, and gave her feedback. Her breaking of the *Do not talk* injunction helped her to heal. Second, she learned that her marriage had only one main problem, alcoholism. She stated that she did not need to look farther than alcoholism. Third, she learned that the spouse of an alcoholic is considered to be at least as ill as the alcoholic, and that there was a self-help group for families of alcoholics. She began regular attendance at Al-Anon meetings while she was in the treatment program. Fourth, Al-Anon was teaching her that her life could get better if she learned some new skills. She began speaking more directly. She began to learn to ask for what she needed, commonly recited as, "Say what you mean, and mean what you say" (I. Polichuk, Personal communication, February 23, 2007). Fifth, in her recollections, WA recounted the many things she learned during the treatment program. WA was happy with the progress that she made in the treatment program, and described how she first stood up for herself to her husband in a positive way while she was in the program (WA's story, pp. 351-354). WA's completion of the co-dependency treatment program was an integral part of her healing.

WA's weekly attendance at Al-Anon helped her make positive changes in her life. It helped her because it was in Al-Anon that she learned that she was not alone. She learned that others were successfully dealing with problems similar to her own. She continued to break the pathological communication rule of mystification; she regularly named the problem in her marriage as alcoholism, with her husband being the dependent, and she being the co-dependent. WA continued to break the *Do not talk* injunction every time she went to an Al-Anon meeting or talked to another Al-Anon member, therefore continually correcting her communication style. WA continued to practise breaking her style of indirect communication. She learned to take responsibility for the things that she was doing, and to let her loved ones take responsibility for what they were doing. The support of her peers was available to her through Al-Anon no matter where she lived. She attended meetings in Saskatoon when she lived there. When she moved to Sandy Bay, she attended meetings there (NRs' story, pp. 496-499), sometimes travelling to Flin Flon to attend meetings there. Her continual attendance at Al-Anon helped her to heal.

WA healed by taking more education. Her act of being willing to try to attain a better education showed that she had an internal locus of control, which meant that she believed that she was able to take charge of her life and change herself and better her circumstances. In their explanation of locus of control as a psychological phenomenon, O'Connell, O'Connell, and Kuntz (2004) asserted that people who have an internal locus of control were able to overcome obstacles, resolve problems, better their lives, and raise their self-esteem (p. 7). After her father-in law died, she decided to move to a nearby city and take more education. The education gave her more job skills so that she could sustain herself better. It also helped her gain more self-esteem; the more that she could do for herself, the better she felt about herself. Her later work and training in the addictions field helped her to heal. The more that she worked with others who were living with problems that were the direct result of addiction, the clearer she was able to see the patterns in her personal and family life (LA's story, p. 422). Thus, the attainment of more education helped her to heal.

WA's spiritual growth was a part of her healing. She first talked about actively seeking help through spiritual means during her severe mood swings after her miscarriage (WA's story, pp. 338-341). She likened that search to *grasping at straws* (WA's story, p. 338). Later, she used her bible to help her to get an answer when she was searching for an answer to whether or not to stay in the marriage (WA's story, p. 343). Still later, she received an answer to the question, "Why does love have to hurt so much?" in a dream (WA's story, p. 353). In her story, WA credited her healing with having a spiritual foundation first, then using it to spring-board to rebuilding or healing her life. Another way of describing having a spiritual foundation is attaining suprapersonal goals. O'Connell, O'Connell, and Kuntz (2004) described Abraham Maslow's self-actualizing needs as the need for self-mastery, love, and service to others, peak experiences, and suprapersonal goals. They noted that "people who became self-actualizing pursued their own goals and dreams. They enabled others in society to evolve larger perspectives as well, and to be caring for all humankind" (pp. 10-11). The growth of a spiritual connection helped WA to heal and rebuild.

Summary

The participants' narratives described the process of healing in the family. WA and HA each described their separate decision to stop drinking alcohol. Each describes that decision as a definite turning point in their lives. Their decisions to stop drinking alcohol was made during a time of social revolution in the western world, an empowering time for the community of Sandy Bay, and when each described their options to do anything else had run out. The violence began ceasing shortly after WA "put her foot down" (DA's story, p. 398). The communal narratives credited spiritual growth as leading to healthier ways of living. WA recollected her personal hunger for spiritual growth, while the stories about HA's growth talked about his growing by beginning to work for a cause.

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[260] HA's story, p. 280

[261] Bell, Montoya, Richard, and Dayton (1998) defined hitting bottom as a period of relatively low level of emotional well-being and self-esteem that precedes efforts at behaviour change (p. 556). They noted that the 12-step theory concept of hitting bottom often occurs at a point close to the time when the decision to seek treatment occurs (p. 565). It may be a reframing process when prior control *of* the addictive substance or behaviour is reinterpreted as control *by* the addictive substance or behaviour (p. 568). They cited Nordström and Berglund's (1986) study which found that thirty-eight percent of alcoholics who had undergone psychiatric treatment for alcoholism named hitting bottom as a reason for their recovery (p. 554).

[262] See WA's story as cited on p. 149

Chapter 9: Reflecting on the project

Research such as this, an ethnographic narrative case study looking into the past pain of an Aboriginal family, should never be undertaken lightly. In her work, Akan (1992) quoted Elder Alvin Manitopeyes who said, "It is not enough for us to merely walk on the Earth, we must be mindful of how we are walking" (p. 209). As a researcher I have had to walk a very tight line, attempting to gather and present potentially explosive data in an ethical, respectful, yet completely rigorous manner.

In order to gain a more complete perspective on knowledge, Battiste (2000) posited that we should include many voices and forums (p. xvi). Battiste illustrated this notion with a story told by Eber Hampton, the president of the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College.

The elder asked Eber to carry a box. He felt proud to be chosen and agreed willingly. The elder then thrust forward what appeared to be an empty box.

His question came from behind the box, "How many sides do you see?"

"One," I said.

He pulled the box towards his chest and turned it so one corner faced me. "Now how many do you see?"

"Now I see three sides."

He stepped back and extended the box, one corner towards him and one towards me. "You and I together can see six sides of this box," he told me (ibid, p. xvii).

In this study I therefore presented the data from both the participants' and my viewpoint. The participants' viewpoints were included in Appendices A – J as a series of stories that made up their more complete story in their own voice. My viewpoint was presented in Chapters 5 – 8 as a compiled narrative of the critical events of the complete story in my voice. Sometimes, in studies such as this, the participants' stories are not included; instead they are considered the raw data. I included them so as not to stifle the participants' voices. The reader could then peruse the participants' stories as well as those of the researcher and therefore gain a more holistic picture of what happened.

This study captured one Woodlands Cree family's life journey across several generations, starting in the traditional lifestyle of hunting and trapping through forced relocation to a small town, and into a foray of racism, alcoholism and violence. The story continued through attempts to solve the family unhappiness by changing locations, living arrangements, and appearances. There were several fundamental changes, especially separating alcoholism and violence, by first stopping drinking, then by confronting and changing the behaviours and beliefs that contributed to the violence. It focused on one northern remote community and showed the complex interplay between history, culture, education, health and community wellness, and economic development, with particular reference to the impact of government policy and services on the community at federal, provincial, regional, and community jurisdictional levels. The family members were a dynamic system that was a part of their extended family, their community, and their country in a distinct period. It is difficult to say whether they could or would have changed in a different context. Further research is required to answer that question.

Viewed through the lens of Human Ecology theory, the study brought forth the importance of a holistic approach to healing from family violence in a northern Canadian Aboriginal context. It may point a way to healing for northern families, to the importance of a multi-agency approach to community health, and to the derivation of effective government policies for social and economic development in remote regions. It pointed to many extensions of future research directions.

For northern families

In this study, WA described identified violence as a *dance,* an interplay between two people, where both people are involved in keeping the dynamics flowing. The dance of violence keeps occurring from year to year within an intimate dyad, and then it spreads to the generations that follow unless interrupted by life changes within individuals and within families. The family members of this study told their stories, and because of that have shattered an injunction, *Do not talk,* that was keeping the violence intact. The story-telling and sharing process helped the family to better understand their own stories. At great risk to themselves, they told their stories of engaging in and then healing from family violence, with the hope that other northern Aboriginal families would have some direction and hope as they embarked upon their own healing journeys.

This tenacious couple stayed together while they separately tackled first their alcoholism recovery, then the violent dynamic interplay. In the story, the importance of the interplay between the individual, family, extended family, community, and larger context became evident. It took an entire community to raise a violent drunken family and an entire community to help them heal.

For Justice, Social Services and health care professionals

The dynamics of healing within this family were described in the stories told by its members. Health care, social services, justice, and spiritual professionals were directly involved in the healing process. The study provides historical views of the effectiveness of various social service paradigms.

The stories of this family point out to professionals that no service can be provided in a vacuum. Each professional seeking to provide a service to northern remote populations should take the historical clash of cultures into consideration. The history of the region and community are important. Events of one hundred years ago affect the behaviours and actions of individuals today.

Professional service providers must know and be sensitive to the history and culture of the community population they seek to serve. The people of this family took many actions and consulted with many professionals in their search for a 'cure' for their unhappiness. The priest was asked to say a special mass. A nun was consulted to stop a potential suicide. The family moved many different times, sometimes staying in the same general area, and sometimes moving as far away as Winnipeg and Saskatoon, but always hoping that a different living arrangement would solve the unhappiness. Health care professionals were consulted regarding alcoholism, pregnancy, depression, and obesity. Social Services provided financial assistance and alternative housing arrangements. The police were called numerous times to separate the couple and keep them each safe from the actions of the other. Justice and Corrections became involved when HA was charged for assault. The professionals appeared to look at the problem at hand from a narrow perspective and a personal point of view, rather than from an overall holistic viewpoint.

In their healing, HA and WA needed to address many issues extending back to their cultural roots. The history of Sandy Bay including the colonisation of the Woodland Cree greatly impacted HA. As a First Nations citizen, he had strokes against him going back at least one hundred years. Personal reflection on his family's story was humbling. Very few, if any people in his situation could have done better. Hopefully the study can assist service professionals to remember the whole human being including their history of oppression.

The study pointed to the importance of community service professionals understanding the importance of spiritual growth in the members of the troubled family. If true healing were to take place, the alcoholism and violence had to be replaced by something else. Al-Anon provided WA with strong spiritual guidance as well as a network of people who were also trying to make improvements in their lives and families. Opportunities for community service at the political level provided HA with a cause; he saw how his life could have meaning if he used it to help members of his community. Alcoholism and violence, when taken away, left a void. These social ills were replaced by a spirit of service, creating connected caring people who were willing and able to help others around them.

For policymakers

The stories of family experience can guide policy-makers to address issues relating to mental health, housing, education, and the environmental and human security impacts of regional resource development. Their stories of healing point out that government policy, in encouraging grassroots empowerment, can put successful decision-making power into effect at the community level.

Shifts in governing policy had great impact on the healing process within this family, and on the general wellbeing of the community of Sandy Bay. From a national policy perspective, post-war Keynesian economic policy increased federal transfer payments to the provinces, which had the effect of reducing unemployment and increasing social benefits. Then came the global anti-establishment movement of the sixties and seventies, which filtered down to shifts in attitude in Sandy Bay, questioning the authority of priest, Indian Agent, and RCMP in the community.

The increases in transfer payments from the Canadian federal government to the Saskatchewan provincial government, combined with the socialist platform of the NDP as the new socialist ruling party in the province, provided financial resources and regional empowerment in Saskatchewan's north so that communities could address their own social priorities at the local level. Through DNS, community boards took ultimate control over how the money for their region was to be allocated. The policy of moving away from the "one-size-fits-all" provincial policies generated in Regina to local community empowerment was pivotal in allowing family members to address personal issues relating to family violence through treatment, employment, volunteer work, and involvement in local governance within their own communities.

For further research

The study suggested several avenues for new or expanded research directions. The story told by WA of her intimate, passive-aggressive involvement in the violence could be one of many stories yet to be told by family members. Her viewpoint is supported by Mills (2003, p. 8).

Another research question could stem from a query as to what role provincial, federal, and community government policies fill in creating the hopelessness and despair that feeds into family violence, or conversely, how their policies could create hope and empowerment.

The juxtaposition of the alcoholism and violence in this family leads to researching it further. Is alcoholism an antecedent of family violence, or is it primarily a result of disempowerment, victimization, and other factors affecting self-worth?

This family has been able to overcome their alcoholism and physical violence, even as other families in the same community did not. But they are only one family. A similar study on another family could explore commonalities that could be more broadly transferable. Other research could attempt to find out what it was about this family that made them the deviant case.

Chapter 10: References

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Appendix A: HA's (Husband's) Story

A lot of the things that I talk about, I learned over the years from other people. My dad told me things. I do not know how my dad knew; he must have learned them from his grandparents or his father. We would be around a campfire, and talking about the secret signs, all the signs of the way it is going to be when this world is going to come to an end. This is where all these things would come out. He said, "Nothing will grow. Things will start to disappear. The animals will start to disappear. The air is not going to be much good. The water is going to be poisoned. There will be vehicles all over the north," he said. "The whole north, where we live now, will be just like ribbons, all over. There will be roads all over the north. People are going to be coming from the south, moving here, to the land that we cherish, that we love. They are going to more or less take it over, and control it like they do everything else. That is going to happen."

I was a good listener, even back then. I would ask him about things that I did not understand, like the stars and the moon. He could tell if it was going to snow tomorrow from how the moon was, or if there was going to be snow for the next couple of days. He could tell how cold it was going to be. I was always curious about a lot of things. I would ask and I got answers, but his saying them never really made any sense. He told me things then that I see now. He told me, "You see planes. They are quite free out there; they fly all over from here to there, and quick. Later on, they are going to be flying so high that you will not even see them. They will just be noise that you hear that will tell you that they are there. A lot of this stuff, I do not think that I will see, but you will see. Your children and your grandchildren will have to live through that, if the world is still around."

A lot of the things that my dad told me fifty years ago or more now make a lot of sense. Today, the land is being clear-cut of its trees. The mines and the minerals are being mined out and the lakes are being taken over by tourist outfitters. Now, when I look at the north, I look at the highways that are going up. There are roads all around us. I think, "This is what he talked about." There are a lot of things to be told, some of them scary, but I guess it is something that is going to happen. It is the inevitable. I see the land being raped. I cannot agree with that. The land is being raped of all its resources, and what do we get out of it? The least that we should get out of it is education and some health, not welfare[263] so we do not have to work for the rest of our lives. Welfare is going to cease to exist. All those people that are totally dependent on it, what is going to happen to them? Where will they go? They have no skills, because they do not believe in bettering themselves, getting an education. Education is essential nowadays. You have got to have it.

My grandfather[264] had a lot of power in the cultural way. The older people still talk about him, that he seemed to have a lot of power. He could talk to the animals, and he seemed to influence the animals.[265] Whenever there was a crisis, he would go to the bush, and when he would come back out of the bush, he would have the answers. He would tell what would happen in the future. The people knew that he could talk to the animals because of the gifts he had in the cultural way.

This is the history. In 1911, Peter Ballantyne and other people broke away from the James Robert Band in La Ronge and formed the Peter

Ballantyne Band. Four or five of the families that joined his band had their trap lines in Manitoba. They decided that they were going to go down river and pick out a spot for a reserve near their trap lines. That is how Pukatawagan came to be. They broke away from the Peter Ballantyne Band and formed the Matthias Cologne Band in Pukatawagan.

My other grandfather[266] did not agree with the treaties. He did not like them; he could foresee that the treaties would change people. He was right. Today, ninety percent of the people are on welfare. When treaties first came, the people did not get welfare; they got a net, flour, and a treaty bonus given to them on treaty day. If you lived on the reserve, the government would give you some kind of shack to live in. My grandfather did not agree with that. He did not believe that somebody had to look after him and his family, and that he had to live in a corral, meaning on a reserve like an animal. He thought that he could take his family out wherever he went and that he could provide for them. He did not want handouts. He did not believe in that system; he wanted no part of it. He always worked: he worked for the Hudson's Bay Company[267]; he worked for the French traders. There were different companies that used to trade by canoe. He spoke fairly good English. Where he learned that, I do not know. He could communicate with the Indian Agent and the Priest.

The Indian Agent kept telling my grandfather that he had to live in Pelican Narrows. He disagreed with him. He said, "No. I will live where I can provide for my family." He had it out a couple of times with the Indian Agent, and they got the Priest and the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company involved. The disagreement was about him wanting to leave Pelican Narrows and going to where he could provide for his family.

The Hudson's Bay manager said, "He is a good provider. He can provide for his family no matter where he goes." The Priest did not agree with my grandfather leaving, but he had to agree with the Hudson's Bay manager who had said, "Yes, he could provide." The Priest had influence over everything, and he said he could provide.

The Indian Agent had no choice. "If you want to go, you go." My grandfather never accepted anything from the Band or the Chief, his dad. He gave up his treaty rights[268] for himself and his family, and left Pelican Narrows to work at the Island Falls Dam [269]. He willingly gave up his treaty rights because he did not want to be controlled by his treaty number. If you had a treaty number, you had to stay on the reserve. You would be told what to do and where to go by the Indian Agent. He did not want to be controlled by the Indian Agent and he did not want the Priest to control him. He did not want anybody to control him. He wanted to run his own life. He wanted to provide for his family the way he could, and the way he thought he should. So he gave up everything and left. That is why I lost my treaty rights at birth, because he gave up everything. My dad and all his other siblings never had treaty rights because he had given them away. My grandfather lived and died in Sandy Bay.

My other grandfather[270] was opposite. What he wanted was a reserve in Sandy Bay for the people here: the rest of his family, and their children, and their children, and their children. That is what he wanted, so he more or less pegged out a reserve but nobody really knows where it is because it was never mapped out. It is in the history books that he wanted a reserve. I have a letter that he wrote to Ottawa[271], asking them to come and survey the reserve land.

They wrote back to him, and said, "Yes. When we come to survey Pelican Narrows and Pukatawagan, we will survey your reserve." But they did not survey Sandy Bay because the federal government already had an agreement in place with the Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company. This reserve got bypassed. They went to Pukatawagan and surveyed there, and from there they flew to Southend,[272] and three reserves were surveyed. My grandfather questioned it but he died shortly after that, in 1928. They next elected Joe Highway, who lived in Pelican Narrows, to become chief after my grandfather. Since they were living in Pelican Narrows, there was no interest for them to pursue the dream that my grandfather had of a reserve for his people in Sandy Bay. That is the way it is still today. My grandfather is buried in a cemetery on an island just across the water from where he wanted the reserve. There are about thirty people in that cemetery on that island. They lived there[273] and people died there, they had their own cemetery on an island. That is where they buried people.

Jacob was my father's uncle, but in our language, it is Grandfather. I call him *Grandfather.* Old Jacob was the medicine man and he lived on the land. He never quit practising what he was doing, even in the days that you were going to go to jail if you practised it. There was a law that said that you were going to go to jail for practising the Traditional beliefs, but he never did believe that somebody should dictate his beliefs to him. That was what he believed, how he worshipped, and where he got his answers, so what is better for me? This is what I do, this is where I get help, and this is where I get my answers. This is how I get help.

I remember seeing my grandfather on the other side of Churchill Bay from Sandy Bay[274]. He lived on the land. He was out there all the time, but he would come in sometimes to Sandy Bay, paddle in, he and the old lady would pick up their supplies: their salt, their sugar, and their tobacco. All they needed was the basics. Then they would take off again.

My dad and I would go to visit with this old man. He had a Sweat Lodge, where he prayed. He was a good doctor, a very good doctor. Anyplace he went, he camped and he practised his medicine, he gathered medicine. He healed people. If you had a kidney ailment, he could cure you. If you had a broken leg, he could cure you. He could do anything. He was a medicine man. My dad used to tell me the things that he did, but it did not make sense to me because I was young. As I grew older, sixteen and seventeen, I remember that same old man, but he was alone. My granny had passed away. I remember him still being a doctor. Whenever you would ask him something he did not say, "Yes." He would say, "I have to sleep on it. I have to ask the people I work for, the people I work with, meaning 'the Grandfathers.' I cannot say this. I cannot help you without talking to them first. I will tell you tomorrow." Later, he made it a point to come and find you, and he would tell you. "No, I cannot do anything for you." From that time on or even before, I was born with that, this was me, this was my belief, and this was my culture.

Another mooshim[275] would get put in jail. I do not know what they put him in jail for, but they locked him up and took his tobacco away and everything. They would put him in jail for whatever reason. They would lock him up and take his tobacco and his pipe. The next morning he would be sitting outside, happy, smoking a pipe. They would find him there. They finally let him go because they could not do anything to him. They would shackle him, and the next day the shackles would be off, so they let him go. His Cree[276] name was *Pegeewis'tsigwan.* That means *Chicken-Head* in English. What his real English name was, I do not know. My mother tells me all these different names but a lot of times she only remembers the Cree names that they had for people. A lot of women were called *Besqwee*. Besqwee was the name for a woman. And that was any woman's name, Besqwee. A man was called *Napewk.* That was his name. Somebody would say *Napewk* to a little boy and that would stick with him throughout life. That is the way it was. There were all these things that happened, and I know a lot of the things that happened.

My father did not agree with the way things worked at Island Falls.[277] People who were working there were segregated. Some treated him very badly. People from Sandy Bay that worked there walked or boated across the bay to go to work. In the wintertime, the same people that you worked for from eight o'clock till five o'clock, if there was a snowstorm last night, you would have to go and shovel their driveways so they could go to work with you. Why could they not shovel out their driveway themselves? But they were superior. That was the way it was set up. They were better, so you had to kiss their feet. You had to brush their shoes, so they did not bring snow into the house. My dad worked there on and off. He always had a good job when he worked there. But he never agreed with the system and he would end up leaving. He got along with all the people that worked there, and the superintendent loved him, but he just could not make himself stay because of the way things were happening there. The other people that worked there from my community brushed the snow off these guys, and treated them like Gods because of the job, or because they were superior. You had to do exactly what they said. They knew best; we knew nothing. We lacked the confidence in our ability to be able to do more for ourselves. But if Island Falls were working today, it would never be like that.

My parents lived on the land when I was small. When they used to bring alcohol to the bush, they would drink that one night and everything else would get put in the cupboard for a year until somebody else came along. They would not drink it. I never saw my dad hitting my mom. They would get into a real shouting match, but that was basically it. When she out-hollered at him, then he would leave because he did not want to holler any more. He gave up. He let her cool off, and then he came back. That was part of being married. You[278] had disagreements and they could become very forceful.

I look back at my parents and other people in this community. They made things work. Things were tough but they were willing to make this thing work. There was never any such thing as a divorce coming to the minds of people because divorce is wrong; it is devil's work. It is wrong because they gave their word and I guess their word was worth a lot. If you tell me that this is going to be, then that is the way it is going to be. Nothing is going to change that. I learned that from the old people, like my mother. She talked a lot about the way things were and I could remember seeing how things were. She never gave up. She tried and she tried and she tried and then things kind of came to a point where she said, 'Alright, you are like this now. Okay,' and there was more or less a unit from there.

We were used to working. We had to work; that was our way of life. The waterway was our highway and it provided a way to sustain a livelihood. It was a way of life. Then we had to move into Sandy Bay[279]. My parents had a family when they came into the community, they had the kids. They had to look after the kids. That was their only job now, and they were not used to that; they did not understand that. None of us could understand it. "Why are they paying us to stay home?"

After we moved into Sandy Bay, my parents got this welfare cheque every month. It was basically just existence. No extras, just existence. They lived on that and managed because my mother was a good manager. She made sure that there was food on the table. My dad was not the manager; he left it up to her. After they had lived in Sandy Bay for a while, they got sucked into drinking with everybody else. Everybody had money, so drinking got to be a way of life. There was no road coming in to Sandy Bay at that time. Come Welfare Day in the summer, it cost fifty-two dollars to fly to Flin Flon. In the wintertime, they would plough an ice road to Flin Flon. People working at Island Falls bought old cars and my parents would hire somebody to take them to Flin Flon on Welfare Day. They would buy a little bit of groceries, and the rest went to booze. At that time they were drinking with a lot of different people and there would be fights. Somebody would fight with his wife and before you know it, they would all be fighting. It was the booze.

When we first came to Sandy Bay, I already knew how the community was like because I had spent summers there before. People would get drunk every weekend and then well on into the week. A lot of the people were on welfare, and some of them worked at Island Falls. At the end of the month, Welfare Day, you knew people were going to get drunk. My mom and dad were used to working all the time. Suddenly, they had plenty of time and did not really know what to do with themselves. They got sucked into that vacuum. They would go to town, and people would offer drinks and then they would expect them to buy drinks back. It started like that. With everybody else drinking and everybody having money, it got to be a way of life.

People had TVs. Not everybody, but some of them did. They watched a lot of TV when it first came out. If one person had a TV, all the neighbours would be watching TV, especially if there was a movie. Everybody liked cowboy and Indian movies. They could relate to the old movie characters like John Wayne, Hop-Along Cassidy, and Roy Rogers. Later on, we had a movie theatre where you could go and pay fifty cents and watch a movie. A lot of the shows were cowboy shows. People loved those. They would cheer for the cowboys; they would not cheer for the Indians.

There were not as many people in Sandy Bay. My parents were the younger people, the thirty year olds, and the thirty-five year olds. Then the older ones, fifty-sixty year old people were parents of others. People loved one another; they did things together. It was always good to see it. I remember we used to go to church and this was a very Catholic-dominated community. The bell rang, and people like our family would go to church. They would take their kids with them. They prayed together. After church people would visit. The men would sit down for sometimes two hours outside the church, smoking their pipes and sharing stories of what they were going to do and who was going to go with who and who was going to partner with who on a moose hunting trip. Some were going to go sturgeon fishing, and who was going to going to partner with them. The women would wander off home. There would be a fire in the stove, and there would be a pot of stew and bannock and we would all get fed. That was how it was. People shared what they had. They would visit and then at the end of the day, go home. That is how we spent Sunday.

The Priest had more power than anybody did. Those days, if the Priest said you did this, then you would go to jail. The Indian Agent would go to the Priest for help. If someone had an argument with the Indian Agent, then the Indian Agent told the Priest, "I want this guy in jail for a month." They would take him to jail. There was no court; there was no judge, just the Indian Agent's word. He was the manager, and the law. He could charge you and put you in jail.

My brother and I were very young, uneducated, not the best in the English language, just a strong back and willing to work. We set out. We could not stay in Sandy Bay because there was nothing that we could do there. I started in construction. I knew nothing about it but I was willing to work and willing to learn. It was the same way with my brother. But my brother was not as strong. He went his way, I went my way. We met here and there and kept in touch.

Working in construction, you worked really hard and you drank really hard to have fun. You made big money then went on a drunk for three or four days. Every payday, you would get four days off so you could go for four days and get drunk or whatever. Every payday if we were in a camp, everybody would disappear. We would not stay in camp. Everybody would come back to the bunkhouses drunk and drink, although it was not allowed in bunkhouses.

In order to belong, I got sucked into not just the work part, but the supposed fun part. That is how I got into the drinking that later on ruined me so badly. Later it came to a point where I had to go to work. I managed to go back to work for quite some time. But then the work became less and less, because the drinking took control. I was not in control. It was the bottle that was taking over and I could not stop it.

Getting back to the violence, I never learned that at home in my early childhood. I never saw it at home. Much later on in life, I saw it once or twice. I saw it when my parents were heavy into the drinking stages, after they came to Sandy Bay. I would see them fight, but it was usually the other way around, my mother beating up on my dad because he would not give her money. My mother drank more than my dad; it hit her harder than it hit him. So when she said, "Let us go drinking," a lot of times my dad would say, "No. I do not want to go."

She would say, "Well, give me the money, to buy something."

He would say, "No. We have to buy this, or we have to pay for that."

She would say, "Okay, I will go and get drunk anyway, even if you do not give me money. So she would go out and get drunk. Then she would come back and fight with him to get money. A lot of times he would end up giving in to her. He did not want to fight with her. Because he was not drinking, why would he want to fight? She was always willing to fight. She was feisty. She would fight with anybody, and he knew that, so he did not want to scare the kids. That was another reason; he did not want to fight in front of the kids. When you are drinking, most people just do not care about where they fight, or how they fight. It is a one-sided thing. It is your needs and never mind anybody else's. You do not think very much of anybody else while you are in that mood. My mother would be beating on my dad. It was never a case of my dad beating my mother. My dad was an easy-going kind of a person. He was not violent. It was not that he could not fight, but he did not want to. I never saw him beat the tar out of her. It was always the other way around. That new way of life took a lot out of my mother. My mother was a good mother; she was a real mother. She is the one that disciplined us. With her it was, "You do, or you are going to get." She was a very aggressive person. He did not fight her back, so of course she won.

A lot of the other violence in the community that I saw was the man beating his wife. Never mind beating her up with a fist, but beating with whatever he could get a hold of: a board, or anything. Once I saw this guy and his wife fighting. There was a little creek that was not deep but it was running. They were fighting. She fought, but he was stronger. He grabbed her; he threw her into the creek and dunked her head. Then he let her go and dunked her down again. He did this again and again until she promised that she would not follow him because he was going some place where he did not want her. It was not until she promised that she would not follow him that he let her go. Then he left her there. When she got out of the water, she was soaking wet, crying, just sitting there crying. We were curious, so we sat there and watched. As kids, we wondered, "What is wrong? Why are they fighting?" But violence was a common thing in the community. That couple was fighting, and further down the street it might be somebody else.

We did not really know why they were fighting. But one thing that I got out of it was that is the way that you treat your wife or your girlfriend. You beat her, and that is alright. There is nothing wrong with it. Men were looked at as superior. They were the boss, and they were better than their wives. The man had more power than the woman. If he really wanted to beat her up, he could beat her up. It kind of got to be a habit, like going to a picture show, going to play slots, or going to play bingo. It was just something else that you did on a regular basis, part of your life. People were fighting all the time and they did not have to be drunk to fight. They just fought. I saw it, and that is how I understood it. That is how I was sucked in. From what I could see, nobody got in trouble. We had police in the community. Even if they were called, they did not really do anything. They would stop the fight, but hardly anybody ever got charged. They were charged for being drunk and fighting. You could beat your wife and get nothing for it. It was all right to touch your wife if she did not listen. The woman was less. That was how I saw it.

Later on I started to realise that you do not do that. After going to jail a couple of times for doing something that I thought was right, I soon learned that you do not do that. I accepted that new teaching because I never did think it was right to beat on your wife. It is not right to beat somebody. What gives you the right to do that? That is wrong.

These people were not really getting into trouble for doing what they did. The law was the manager, the boss. He could charge you and put you in jail. But how come he did not charge you? He seemed to think it was all right. I got a mixed message. Later on, I found out differently. Nowadays, you get charged for doing that. That is why my next-door neighbour can get into an argument and she calls the police. They grab him, and he goes to jail. It is not a fight because she could beat him up if she wanted to; he is just a small guy but she can get the cops to come and pick him up. That is the way it is. I have seen when people fight like that, a man and a wife. The man usually is the one who gets picked up and is gone. Nine times out of ten, it is the woman who starts the fight, but he is the one that goes to jail. I am not saying that the men do not fight, but a lot of times the woman provoked him. Maybe they want him to go to jail, so they start a fight. They fight, and he goes to jail. It is a mixed message, the woman is using that to her advantage and it works.

I have seen a lot of people fight when they are sober. I still see that today in this same community. A man and woman fighting, and they are both sober. They are fighting; ready to kill each other. She gets a two by four and hits him over the back or wherever she can hit him, and he punches her every chance. Then they report it. Sometimes it is the woman that instigates the fight, but it is not perceived like that. The fighting is just something they do on a regular basis. They do not have to be drunk to fight; they just fight.

WA and I argued for years and we fought a few times before we got married. It was always when we were drinking. Then when something like that happens, it builds up to be a regular thing. For us, it did not get to be a regular thing because we did not fight constantly. It never got to the point where somebody was about to get killed. It never got to the point where I got the shotgun and hit her over the head, or where she hit me over the head. It was a fight. It did not happen all the time. I could probably say that it happened maybe ten times since our relationship started. She tried being violent too, but when we had the kids, she drank only once in a while. The period of time that we had these fights and when I went to jail did not seem like it was a long time. I ended up in jail a couple of times during the fights over the violence, but not for two months, or six months or a year. The only amount of time I spent in jail was basically overnight. I was just thrown in there to sober up and behave myself. Then a lot of times, I could not go home afterward. I did not want to go home. There was too much shame when I sobered up. I knew that it was wrong. I had to be drinking to get violent with WA. I would never do that when I was sober, not stone cold sober. I learned the violence when I was drinking and it came out when I was drinking. But when I was sober, I did not think like that.

Everybody has their own little ways of hurting people. I have seen a few people right here in this community who hit their partners just for the sake of hurting them. There is really no argument, but it is just because they get some kind of a feeling from it. When I became violent, I was angry for whatever the reason at the time. That reason was the drinking, the influence of a chemical: a substance that changed my personality from who I was to what it made me. I was a different being after drinking. It did not happen all the time. It was sometimes, and it could be triggered. It depended on where you were at or how you were feeling during the drinking. Then the moment came that somebody said something and it was usually somebody that you were closest to that you wanted to hurt. It was not really anybody else. And why that was so is something that I still do not know. Why do you want to hurt somebody? I tried to figure it out but never could.

When I became violent, it was because I was angry. I always had a reason to be violent. The real reason was the drinking, the influence of a chemical, a substance that changed my personality from who I was to what it made me. I was a different being after drinking. Even if my partner was not drinking, I would come home mad at something. Everything would be fine at home, but she would say something and it triggered that anger that I brought into the house, and then I would take it out on her. For what? I do not even know for what. But I guess it was just to hurt somebody. Because I felt that I was hurt by whomever over there, so I was here now, and I was going to hurt this person. It was never an intentional thing to really maim or hurt. It was just to get that anger out, but it never did anyway. The booze instigated the violence.

Then the next morning, I would see what had happened the night before, and I did not want to talk to anybody. There was only one person that I could talk to, other than the kids when they got a little older, and that was WA. I did not want to ask her anything about what happened because I knew I would get it. I felt so terrible that I did not even want to get up to look around and see what happened. I felt terrible, sorry, and ashamed. I did not remember what I had done. Some parts I remembered, some I did not.

During the course of the anger anything went. I did not care. It was a one-sided thing. You put everything else aside and you did what you thought you needed to do for yourself. Then the next day, I questioned it, "Why did I do that? I am sorry." It never, never, never, never really went away. It was always there. I would see what had happened the night before and I did not want to talk to anybody. I was ashamed of myself; I felt terrible. I had the feeling, "Why did I do that to somebody I knew, to somebody I love? Why did I do that? I am sorry." That feeling never really went away because it was always there inside me. I was punishing myself, and I did not know how to deal with it. "I am sorry" was never good enough because that feeling was still on the inside, not on the outside. It was not the hurt feeling of somebody punching you and you having a black eye. It was a different hurt feeling inside. A lot of times, I could not go home or I did not want to go home because of the shame. I felt bad. I felt terrible, because why would I do something like that? What would make me do something like that? You are sorry, but that is not enough because it happened already. But then you are ashamed of yourself, at least I was. I felt terrible. Why did I do something like that? To somebody I knew, to somebody I love? Why did I do that? WA looked at it from another angle. "I am no good. I am mean." She said, "You cannot come home. Do not come home. Do not bother coming home." I was angry again, but I did not go home to fight. That was the way it was.

When I was on skid row[280], a lot of times I did not think; I just lived. I thought then that I was worthless; I was no good. I was never going to be better. I saw so many different things and then I started to have conflicts in my mind. I started to think, "Is there anything better than this? Could there be anything better than this?" I thought about it, and I thought about it because I always did a lot of thinking. What I thought about did not make a lot of sense. My thoughts did not amount to very much because I could not make rational decisions. Even if I was trying, how could I do it? Who would listen?

So for me I guess the turning point was that I wanted to live. I wanted to live to be able to do something different, other than what I had been doing. I thought that with the help of God, the grace of God, I could probably do it. So then I got involved a little bit at a time. A little bit at a time, I talked to people who could listen. Because I still had people who would listen to me, one to one. They would talk to me. There were people that cared. They would often ask me, "Why do you do that to yourself?"

I said, "It is my business, not yours. It is my life, not yours," because I thought they were lecturing me. I guess what kept me going is faith. I was told that I was a good person; I could change if I wanted to. Before I took that first drink in the morning, I would lie there and wonder, "Why do I do this? Why do I have to be like this?" It always came back to what I had learned as a kid growing up.

I had learned, "You have got to be as good as yourself, you could move the world if you want to. You do not have to let anybody else tell you that you are less, and you do not have to prove yourself to anybody that you are less or better because you need to be yourself. You are a good person, a contributing person." I grew up being taught that we are all good people. There were better things out there for me if I wanted to get them. I needed to change. I thought that I could change, but I did not want to because I figured, "I am the problem so I am going to do away with the problem, and then it will be good for everybody else." That did not work. I tried suicide a couple of times, once with a gun, and once by setting the house on fire. It failed each time because I was so far down under the influence of alcohol that I could not even do that right. It never ceases to amaze me how DR took the gun and put it away without it going off, and that DR was the one that came in and put the fire out.

I hit bottom. Everything was in turmoil. The family, the work, nothing was working. I realised that there was something that had to change. That something had to be me; I had to make a change. I more or less admitted that I was helpless. Somebody was going to have to take over because I was thinking of doing the right thing, making the right choices. I was sincere. I gave my all to the All-Mighty Power. "Help me change. Help me make a difference in how I do things, and how I treat people. How I accept things." I guess that is what made the difference. I gave myself to the Higher Power.

I wanted to live; I did not want to die. Everything else had failed. I figured, "Well, there has got to be a reason. Maybe there is a reason why I have to be around longer." I talked to the alcohol and drug counsellor.[281] He said that he would phone around to see if there was anyplace where I could go. He found a place in The Pas, Manitoba, Rosaire House. He said he would take me down there if I wanted to go. I finally decided to go one morning. I poured a bottle of whiskey into a thermos, and I drank it on the way down. By the time we got there I was drunk. They checked me in.

I got the DTs. I was seeing things. I was in bad shape. I would try to go to sleep and I would hear people partying. I could tell exactly who was at that party. I could hear the pour of the drink, the music, and the laughter. I would get up and check to see who all was there. There was nobody there. I thought, "I must be going crazy." Then I got scared.

When I was vulnerable, an old man would show up and say, "You are coming with me." I never went with him. I guess if I would have gone with him, I would have died. I was that close. Why did he ask me to go with him? He only showed up when I was at my weakest. He was going to take me away. It was surprising. I had never seen him before and I have never seen him since that time. I guess I was that close to death a lot of times.

This guy from Grand Rapids kept checking on me all the time. Three or four days after I got there, I told him I was leaving and he asked, "Why?"

"I cannot hack it here." I was shaking, I was puking, and I was hearing things.

He said, "You know, I was like that when I come here. Stay."

I thought, "I will give it another day." I started not feeling crazy and not being embarrassed. I got to meet a few other people and talked to a few of them. They would come and talk to me. It started to feel a little bit better. I was still sick from the alcohol withdrawals. I could not eat anything solid, just liquids. My whole system was way out of whack. My stomach shrunk. I was not really hungry. I found out that there was a lot of coffee there and every now and then there would be a donut or a banana. I would take that. I do not know how long I was there before I started to realise that I could stay. I could finish the program. I did not have to leave because it started to feel safe. It was good for me there. It was better than being outside.

I really did not have to do anything but follow the program, which was good. I talked to the different counsellors there and then they assigned me to one counsellor. He was really good for me. He understood the problems I had. He really spent a lot of time with me which was good, because I got to understand myself a bit more, and understand my problems. I started to feel remorse about some of the things that I had done. I started to get feelings back.

After about two weeks, two and one-half weeks, I got to be part of the programming and part of pretty well everything in there because I felt good. I wanted to live. I did not want to die. I got the chance to phone home, to talk to the kids and WA. It was good. They came out once to visit me. Being in there that long and feeling good about the place, I did not really want to leave. I got my thirty-one days.

I hitchhiked back. All the other times that I quit drinking, WA knew that I would not quit drinking. She told me that. But that time, the last time that I went home, I was a totally different person from before. She knew that this time it was real. After that, things started to change. It was really, really good for a long time.

That is how I became who I am today. I still say that I am an alcoholic because one drink would put me right back there. I cannot say that it is never going to happen again although I pray that it does not. If I could sit here and have one or two drinks, walk out and forget about it for the next two or three weeks or six months, I would still drink. But I know that I cannot do that because it is not going to end with that one drink. That one drink might kill me because I take that one drink and I cannot stop. Then how long is it going to be before I drop dead?

For me, it was about hitting bottom and the violence that went with it. I was a dangerous person when I was drinking. I would fight physically and viciously. A lot of people did not like what they saw. I knew the signs that told me that I was going to be violent. I could feel the breathing. I could feel that something was boiling inside me and it was going to come out. Now it still does boil up inside me and I do not know how to deal with it. It can be dangerous sometimes. I do not remember at the moment when the violence happens but I know when it is coming.

I, being a violent person, know that you become violent because you have no other way to go. You just want to hurt somebody, and it is usually someone that you are close to. After I quit drinking I blacked out in anger and rage a couple of times. I blacked out and got into a fight three times. I do not remember what happened.

Like everything else, once you start the process, change for the better, and try to learn the ropes, then you try to get the right tools. When I was drinking heavy, the days that I was a violent person, a drunken person, a bad person, my tools were standard tools.[282] Then I started to change as I progressed to try and better myself. This set of standard tools that I used did not work for me now. Now I use metric tools because those were the tools I need. Today, I am not a standard person, I am a metric person. Everything is metric-ised, every bolt that you could use in the standard system thirty years ago, you cannot use anymore. It does not work. That is me. I have lived, I have used these old tools, but they are worthless to me now. I cannot use those tools. I have got to convert to the tools of today. That is what a person needs to do, and a person needs to think, "How do I better myself?

There are so many things that you could do for yourself that work for you. Take the ones that work for you, and the ones that do not work, throw them away. Be able to speak to people freely. Do not hide from people. Do not hide anything from people because people need to hear your story. Stories need to be heard. We share and help each other with our stories. If you speak in an A.A.[283] meeting, for example, I am sure you have heard people say, "Were you telling my life story?" I have been told that lots of times. "How did you know that? Why are you talking about me?"

"I am not talking about you, I am talking about me."

"Well that is my story! You tell it as if it is your story."

"That is my story too. There is nothing saying that you cannot tell your story. I am not taking anything away from you; it is just coincidental that we might have done things the same way. When you go to an A.A. meeting, especially if you are a new person, you are scared." I carried a lot of fear in me.

"What did that person say?" It is like they are talking only about you. "Why are they all talking about you?" It is not until you start growing within the organisation that you start to understand that nobody is talking about you. You cannot forget the Higher Power, the Almighty God. He is the one that will guide you through the process, no matter what your belief is.

The reasoning behind not to fight anymore was that I was really conscious at that point of "right" and "wrong." Obviously, it is wrong to fight with your partner, to hurt your partner. How do you do that? Why do you do that, when you are supposed to be caring for this person? Why did you want to hurt them? I could never understand that, why a person would want to hurt them.

I learned my lesson. Later I started to realise that you do not do that. After going to jail a couple of times overnight for doing something that I thought was right, I soon learned not to do it. Nowadays, I always look back and I cannot change what happened, so I have to live with it, and I have to make it better. Nowadays I concentrate on a lot of the work that I do, like talking to people and trying to help out.

When you sober up, you know that the violence is wrong. The substance or the chemical that enabled you to do things freely is just a fraction of the problem that you have. You have a much bigger problem to deal with because a lot of times, being a violent person, you become violent because you have no other way to go. You just want to hurt somebody, and it is usually someone that you are close to. It never really happened that many times that I can recall. It was not an everyday thing. It was not an every weekend thing. I admit it was wrong to do that. It was wrong, whatever triggered it. It was a spur of the moment thing, nothing you really thought about. It is not something that you think about, and it was not something that you thought about. It is not something you intended to do, but it just happened. And for that I am sorry. I was sorry then and still today, I am sorry, and I have to live with that. I feel bad about a lot of those things, but I have to live with that. I have to deal with it.

I have tried daily work and different ways and different forms and talking about it to deal with it. I am not ashamed to talk about the things that I have done, things that I remember happening. I have nothing to hide from anybody. I do not feel I have to. Who are you that I have to hide from you, and pretend to play a pretty picture how great of a guy I was? I am a down-to-earth guy. I could tell my next door neighbour how I feel if they wanted to listen. If I put it out there, somebody will hear what I am saying, and what I am trying to do. At the same time, I give them a message here. It is wrong to hurt your wife. It is not right.

I talk to people; people that care to listen. A lot of people come to me and ask me for advice of how did I deal with this, and how did I deal with that, and how can I do this now? A lot of people think I am a cruel guy too, because nothing really gets me down. I try and deal with everything the best way I can with a conscientious mind, so that I do not have to pretend. If I am hurt, I am hurt. If I am hurt enough, I am going to cry, I do not care who is there because it is my feelings I have to deal with, and not worry about yours. I am the one that is hurting inside.

Everybody has their own way of doing things and everybody has their own path that they have to follow. Hurting your spouse or your kids or yourself is not the answer. It is never the answer. What would it have resolved if I had killed myself twenty years ago? I would have left a legacy for my kids and my grandchildren, that their father or grandfather committed suicide. That is not much of a legacy to leave.

Nowadays, I always look back and I cannot change what happened. The things that are happening now, I cannot change, so I have got to live with it and make it better. Nowadays, I concentrate on a lot of the work that I do, like talking to people and trying to help out here and there; trying to understand, and trying to get through to people, "There are better things out there that you can do. Do not beat your wife. Go and do something that is progressive and that is positive and good for you, good for your kids, and good for your neighbours, and try and be a role model of some kind. We can all be role models in certain things that we are good at. We can be good at a lot of things that we want to do." For me, it is endless. In this community I hear people, the younger people, the older people, my peers say, "I have nothing to do. I am bored. That is why I get drunk."

I say, "No, you want to drink. That is why you are doing it. Look at me. Even at my age. I could get up in the morning and work twenty-four hours till tomorrow morning, and I still would not have enough time to do what I wanted to do. It does not have to be physical labour; it does not have to be hard work. I try to figure out how I could make better things for myself and other people that I can influence around me. That is my job now. Doing the drugs, the alcohol, and going to court because you beat up your partner, your wife is not the answer. Taking it out on somebody else is never the answer. What happened last night only enlarges yesterday's problem. It never went away. Hiding in a bottle is not the answer. I hear a lot of people say, "I do not drink now, but I smoke up." So what is the difference? I turn around and I say, "Well, you are still not clear in the mind. You are still not one hundred percent. You still have that split personality because you are taking it in a different form."

I am sitting here and talking about these things on tape. It is something, a way of trying to get across to people, "You do not have to be like this. You do not have to live like this. We can all change. Things can be better for people."

A lot of the other things that I used to do, like hurting other people, there was no need for that. There was no positive in that. I thought to myself after the booze was gone, I had to do something different. I had to get away totally from who I was and what I was during the period of my drinking and whatever else I did. I had to try and improve myself, try and better myself, try and understand people better. If I could work with people, then this was my project. This was something else I needed to do. I learned a lot during the learning course of being a drunk. Then I had to learn the other side because I never really knew much about the other side. Learning the other side took me away from all the other things, the bad things.

I wanted to get from the bad to the good, to change it and make things positive. The best thing to do is to start with it at home, and see how things could change at home. That is what I did. I tried to stay away from arguing about something that did not need to be argued about. I tried to resolve it in a matter where it is going to be good for everybody. I got to a point where today I do not really feel like arguing, especially with my wife or my wife used to be, whatever happens. I do not feel like arguing. If I feel that she is angry at something and I could use her help, I just end up looking at her. If she is about to tell me something that is not going to be too good, and she comes out with it in a way that it is not good, then that is something that she has to deal with. Me, I would like to talk across the table, "This is how I feel. This is what I think." I am not going to argue about it because I do not want to. I have been there. I know what it has done, and I know what it could do. I do not want to go back there. Just like the days when I was drinking, I ran into a brick wall, into crises. Do I think of going back there? No. I do not want to go back there. I have been there. I have lived that life.

Today, there are so many good things over here that I could work with, to make people understand that you do not have to be like this all your life. There is programming out there, especially nowadays. You can take Anger Management programs. There are so many things now where a person could do to better themselves. They do not have to live like that. If you are going to court every month when court day comes because of blackening your wife's eyes or your kids or something, is it not time to change? I think it is time to change. I do not think you can live like that forever. Times change, a person changes, and we all grow up. I am grown up. I got to a point where I am really growing because there are a lot of things coming from all directions that I could be doing. I like to concentrate on some of the things that are really important to me now. If I have to do other things, I will deal with them as I go. There are so many positive things out there. People say, "I am bored. I do not know what to do." A person has to change within first, from who they are over here as this person, to who they think they want to be, to get away from this bad thing that they are living over here, to try and better themselves to be better people.

A lot of people, they are in a crisis, they are going to jail. They run to the Outpatient Centre, and say, "I want to go out for treatment." That is a band-aid solution on the problem. That is not right. If you want help, want it for the right reason, to fix yourself. Not to get away because you are going to go to jail by the next court day because you beat up your wife and kids. Because when you come back, it just prolongs the agony of the people that you are hurting all the time, the people that you are supposed to love.

I look at those things and I think it is just a waste because if you are going to try and do this to better yourself, not anyone else, then you have to be first. The reason that I feel that I have to be first is because if I cannot change myself, then how am I going to change you? How am I going to support you or advise you in trying to better yourself so we do not have this fight going on? Do not create a fight that is going to drag me back to your level, to drag me back to the point where I will go back drinking.

There are programs now where parents can go into a treatment centre with their kids. They have that here. I do not know how it is working even though I was a part of the creation of that. The family unit has to evolve around change. Your kids, from what they saw, will start to look at the positive things about you: who you are and who you are trying to be, and they too will start to see and will start to change. So you are trying to change a whole family unit here, from bad to fair, from fair to good, from good to better. Your kids will be good parents when they grow up. They will probably still remember the bad things, and those things will spark up now and then, but it is never going to always be a one-sided thing where this is all they saw when they were growing up.

Today, from what I see happening in the community, I know that they saw this when they were growing up. There are thirty-five and forty-year-olds here in this community that are beating on their husbands or wives. But you cannot really blame them because that is how they grew up. They saw their dad beating their mom or their mom beating their dad, because it works vice versa. It is not only the man that beats up his wife. There are a lot of aggressive women in this community. I see people beat the tar out of their wife with a board, with a bat, whatever. They really beat them up. A lot of things you can get away from, but the most important thing is dealing with yourself, and wanting to better yourself. If you cannot better yourself, then you cannot help them get better. You have to be well enough yourself and strong enough to stand on your own two feet and say, "I will not accept this any more. I will try and make it better for me, and if I can make it better for me, then I will influence my family to try to be better for themselves."

In our family's case, it has come to a point. I come from a very large family, and I do not think that there are more than two of us that drink. I do not know if anybody drinks in my family. We are all so scattered and everything, but nobody except one seems to be having a drinking problem or a fighting problem with their spouse.

I try and work with people holistically, as a whole unit. That is why I talk about things that will help somebody. I try to talk about honesty as much as I can, although nobody is one hundred percent honest in everything. I always use a phrase, "We are human beings." We make mistakes. We are not perfect. If God was walking down the street here, somebody would find a flaw with him. His shoes would not match or his shirt would be ripped or his beard too long. That is part of being a human being. We are never going to be perfect in who and what we are and where we live. We can always try to be the best that we can for ourselves, and the people around us that we care for.

My boy and my girl are number one, my family. I have the most feeling for them and my grandchildren. With my grandchildren, Margaret is my baby. I treasure that girl because I feel there is a bond between me and her. She comes to me in dreams just like her mother. She was my little girl, but it was not the same way as it is with Margaret. Margaret has seen a lot more of me, of what I am. She is too young to understand that I was not always like this. Maybe in time, she will get to understand if she reads the book that I am going to write. The legacy that I am leaving behind is that I was bad and then changed towards good. There are always two sides to a story. I leave nothing out; not just tell the good side. I like to be telling the truth, not trying to hide anything. If I was part of that bad thing, then I was part of it. I have nothing to hide.

To the people that care to listen, I strongly suggest to be yourself. You have got to understand yourself; know who you are. Do not let anybody tell you otherwise. We are who we are. I am a grass-roots person. I am a Cree Aboriginal person before I am treaty. I cannot change who I am. The only thing that I can change is how I deal with people.

For me, tapering off from being the bad guy to being to the better guy, not necessarily the good guy but a whole lot better guy, was that I learned to have patience. I never had patience before. I learned to have patience, a lot of patience. I have looked at everything from different angles. I wanted to get from the bad to the good, to change it and make things positive instead of negative. I thought, "The best thing to do is to try it at home, and start with it at home, and see how things could change at home." I would like to talk across the table and say, "This is how I feel. This is what I think." But I am not going to argue about it. Nowadays, I try to talk to somebody who wants to argue or fight over something. I usually try to negotiate, to be diplomatic about the process and not get hysterical. I try not to get into a screaming match with a person that has got a problem because that does not resolve it; it only adds more fuel to the fire. That is another way of dealing with myself. That is how I have learned to deal with going from being a really bad person to trying to be a good person. I have come to the point where, if you want to fight me, I will turn around and walk away. I will try and talk to you, and if I fail in trying to talk to you, I am just going to turn around and walk away and leave you. I do not want to fight you. I do not need to fight you. When someone is trying to control me I get frustrated and I go in my hole and I do not come out. You can say whatever you want; you can do whatever you want. I am not going there. I am dug in, I am not going. That is how I deal with it.

Nowadays, I go into a meeting or a gathering and sit there for hours, even in the sun and the heat. If I feel that there is something that I have got to learn or that I do not want to miss, I can sit for hours. When I go to a meeting, sometimes I want to go to the bathroom, but there is something that is being talked about that I want to learn, so I do not go. I stay and listen because if I miss five or ten minutes of a speech, then I have missed a lot. It is important for me to hear the whole of what someone is saying. Patience helps me to be able to listen and grasp some of the things that I hear. I cannot pick up everything that I hear but some things are just what I need to learn. Then you focus on that.

When you come to a point where you come as close as you can to making it perfect then you move on to other things. There is never the thought, "I have got to go and beat up my wife, because that will make me better." Because what does that do? It creates hard feelings. Your family is hurt, your kids are hurt, your mother and dad is hurt, her mother and dad are hurt, your relatives are hurt, your brothers are hurt, your sisters are hurt. There are a lot of people to consider, not only me. I do not think I should be that hoggish and think, "This is what makes me feel good," and go ahead and do it because I know that is not the answer. It is not the answer.

If you want to change, there is nothing that can make you stop from changing. You cannot one day be a drunk and the next day or the next week, be a totally different person; it never works like that. It is a growing period of years of hard work. You have got to work on it. Just because you kick the booze or drug does not mean that you are well now. I hear a lot of people that come from a treatment centre and say, "I am healed now. I am fixed." Then, the next week you hear that they beat up their wife and they were not drinking. Does that mean they healed? No, they did not heal. The substance or the chemical that enables you to do things freely is just a fraction of the problem that you have. You have a much bigger problem to deal with and that is the inner part of you. Once you change that inner part of you, things will start to change. But you have to constantly, constantly, constantly say, "I want to change." You have to make it happen. Replace the anger, and the fighting with good things. You can replace it with good things that you do for your spouse, your kids, or the people that you have influenced. You do not just say, "I am doing this for you because I did those bad things to you before." No. You have to make yourself feel good, that you returned something. Nobody has to know. That is what is important. If you want to change, there is nothing that can make you stop from changing. You cannot, one day, be this drunk and the very next day, or the next week be a totally different person; it never works like that. It is a growing period of years of hard work. You have to work on it.

I ask my kids a lot of times about how much they remember of the drinking days, and they do not really remember that much. They say, "It is not important any more. We do not have to think about it. You do not have to talk about. It is not like that any more." Since that time there are a lot of good things that happened.

I talked about this once with DR. She said, "Your legacy: that is what we want. We do not want anything else. You have done so much for us; this is what we want as something that you will be leaving behind."

I thought about that, and decided that if it is important to them, then I guess it is because they have seen the change and the growth. Maybe they do not like everything that I do, but it is still so much better than before. Today, they can count on me for doing little things for them that I prioritise. It is the same thing with SN; he does not ask me for much. He asks for advice now and then. I give it. It is the same thing with DR. Little things that they want and I can help with, some good free advice: that is what I do.

I do not just do that for my family. I try and do that for other people that come and say, "What do I do here? I have run into a brick wall here. How do I deal with it?" A lot of people come to me and say, "How did you deal with it?" Or "How do I deal with it?" It is not going to be the same way that I dealt with it. You have to be your own being. You have to be able to think of how it is going to work for you. It is not going to necessarily work the way it worked for me, because we are different. We think different, but the basics are the same, because you get the same results. If you deal with what I dealt with, it is going to come out different for you. How it turns out will depend upon how you deal with it.

Nowadays, I try to talk to somebody if they want to argue or fight over something. I usually try to negotiate, to be diplomatic about the process, and not get hysterical because that does not resolve it. It only adds more fuel to the fire. That is how I have learned to deal with going from being a really bad person to trying to be a good person. I have come to a point where, if you want to fight me, I will turn around and walk away or I will try and talk to you. If I fail in talking to you, then I am just going to turn around and walk away and leave you. I do not want to fight you. I do not need to fight you! I can deal with it in a different way and it does not matter what you call me, what you say to me, I am still going. I do not want to be in a screaming match with you because there is no point there; there is nothing positive about that. It is going to escalate the issue to a point where it is going to be that much harder to deal with. I have learned that. I guess it could have something to do with age. I have learned to mellow. I have learned to be patient. I am a good listener. I can sit down, and listen for hours. And still I can learn this and that from talking and hearing a person talk. Even when they are angry, I can pick up something that will help me to deal with some of the issues that I still have. There are still a lot of things that I live with, that I can never forgive myself for. But I am not God; I cannot judge myself. I have to live with the issues that I have, try and get away from them, and not use them in a negative manner against anybody else. They are my issues. I have to be the one to resolve them.

The sexual abuse was another factor that plays a big part in my being who I was. I am not making excuses for who and what I was, but it is very important. I do not think much about it anymore because I have dealt with it. It played a big part in clogging up my mind because subconsciously it was both there and not there. Every now and then it would come about that something had happened. It was sort of like in a dream, but it was not a dream; it was the real thing. I think the anger that I carried played a big part of who I turned out to be from a young man to a raging bull when I started drinking. I did not really know what it was, but sometimes you wake up from a dream and you think back, "Hey, it did happen." But then it goes away again because you do not want it around. That could have played a part in my anger, the combination of that and the other things triggering it, like a disease is triggered. Certain things trigger cancer. Certain things trigger diabetes. The sexual abuse was the disease that I had that I did not deal with for a long time.

Once I dealt with it, then it was a thing of the past. Before that, I more or less accepted it, but I never dealt with it. Later I said, "It has to be dealt with sometimes."

What really made the sexual abuse hard to deal with was that it was with a person with authority. I could not understand as I was growing up these things that I heard about sexual abuse, residential schools, and incest. In a small community I know that it still happens but it is a hush, hush thing. "Do not say anything. Do not tell your mother or do not tell your dad" if it is a brother or sister relationship. That is sad when it is not talked about, when it is not brought to the forefront and dealt with. If you deal with it, then you can move away from it and start to heal yourself.

I gave up and more or less accepted a part of it. But I never dealt with it, and I said to myself, "It has to be dealt with; it has to be dealt with sometimes." My abusive relationship is what stems from that because there was always something bothering me. I could never figure it out because I did not want to figure it out. There was something that happened back there but I did not want to remember; I cared not to remember. It was back there. I brought it out in the open and then it was not a problem anymore. I did not have to hide from anybody; I did not have to lie to anybody. I did not have to blame anybody for anything, not even the person that did it. I wanted to go and find that person and sit across from him, and ask, "Why did this happen?"

But all this time I felt that I was the bad person, because of what [illegible] heard from my parents, my grandparents, and any other older people that I respected as a kid. They always said that you never say "boo" about a Priest, or the church, or a nun. Who could I go to? That person was respected, held authority and power, and was the one that did it, so who could I go to? The person that everybody trusted did this, so who was going to believe me? I know that the same thing happened to other kids. Were they going to say the same thing like me? Or were they going to hide, and say that I was talking for nothing? Today, there is a guy in Saskatoon. He has been a drunk all his life. He said, "I saw all of that." He said, "My mother told me never to say anything. It was nothing."

Spiritual growth was a very important part of moving from the violence to being a better person. When the negative things were dealt with, then you could move away from it and start to heal yourself. You can get help in the healing process from being with others and doing things like the Sundance, the Sweat Lodge, or the Teaching Lodge. It is my heritage, it is my culture. I have got nothing against the Catholic religion, because I was baptised Catholic. I cannot say anything bad about it, because the Priest was a human being, like me. He had flims and flaws like any human being, and that was one of his flaws. I happened to be there, and it happened. That does not mean that the whole Catholic Church is bad. I cannot say that. I cannot say that every priest is bad, every nun is bad, or every brother is bad. I cannot say that. I respect them. But my real belief is my culture. The Sundance, the Sweat Lodge, the Teaching Lodge, the gatherings that people share: that is what I like to see, people sharing, talking about what they see, what they heard, and what they got out of it. I like to see that. At the end of everything, there should be a day for people to sit around and, anybody that wants to get up and say, "This is what I learned from being here. This is what it did to me for being here. This is what changed me, and this is my vision of where I want to be." A time to set your goals and objectives for yourself, for how far you are going to go. A place and time where you would not be ashamed to say, "This is what I see and what I lived."

My mom and I have our differences about the Catholic religion. It is not because I do not believe in the Catholic religion. I could go to your church, the United Church, or the Jehovah's Witnesses; it is just an artificial boundary for me. You do not have your own individual God; I do not have my individual God. God is for all, for ever. How you pray and how you believe works for you because you pray to God, and it is the same for me. Why do you have to impose your belief on me and make me believe the same thing and brainwash me to a point where I do not believe anything else? That is what happened here: assimilation. The difference that I have with my mother is that she is brainwashed because she grew up in Sturgeon Landing, a Residential School. For her, nothing a Priest can do and nothing the brothers can do, nothing the sisters can do is wrong although she tells me as another story that she got the tar beaten out of her by those servants of God. They are servants of God but my question is, "Why are they punishing me for something that I do not do? I am under their authority; there is nothing that I can do that would hurt them. Yet they are punishing me! I am not getting fed well." My mother used to tell me that they would buy fish from the local fishermen there and they would boil them, and boil them and boil them, just like you boil them for dogs. It ended up being one big mush with carrots, turnip, and potatoes. Many students could not eat that because the fish is good if it is boiled the right way. But when you mush it, you do not want to eat anything like that. She used to tell me that if you did not eat it, you would not eat at all. A lot of the kids that could not eat that stuff would be gone. My mother tells me today that a lot of those kids were her peers. She would ask, "Where did that one go?"

"Oh, they had to go home." Yet that kid had died and a lot of times, it was malnutrition. But you see the way it was, and now you try and tell me that the Catholics are the most and the best and the only? I have to disagree with you on that because why did you do this? You literally murdered somebody's kids and you are a servant of God that I have to worship? No, I cannot do that. These are the times that my mother and I have our differences. I tell her about this way, the Traditional way, anything that comes from the ground: the earth, the herbs, the medicines, the sun, the rain, the air, and the fire is a natural thing. "That is God-given." These beliefs from the Priests that you are going to go to hell or to purgatory: is there a hell? I do not think that there is a hell or a purgatory. It is how good a person you are in this world, and how rough a life you live here.

I believe in the Traditional way because it is down to earth; that is our thing that was given to us by our grandfathers and ancestors a hundred to five hundred to a thousand years ago. This is what they worshipped. There was no Priest that came and congregated in a church and built a church. They prayed out in the open fields in a circle. That is how they did it. It was not until white people came and said, "Well this is how it is going to be, and this is your religion, and it is going to be your name." I do not believe in that; I believe in what my grandparents and my ancestors believed in. It is not because of them believing that; I am not following their belief or traditions, but this is where I get my Higher Power. This is what is going to help me. The more I understand it, the better it is going to be for me to help other people understand themselves.

I need to believe in something. I need to believe in God, or a Higher Power, or whatever you want to call him. I believe in God or "See-Manitou" in my language. I have faith that I never had before. I used to go to church, and I went to church because I was told to go to church. I never really had any intention of going to church and worshipping because I did not believe in worshipping something that I did not see, something that I was not familiar with. As a kid, I grew up and learned all the ways of the church. I even spoke Latin in church because I used to be an alter boy. But at that time it served the purpose of my belonging someplace until I started to realise, "No, this is not for me." I got vibes and feelings telling me that this is not where I should belong. But I still had that big thing in me, that God that I prayed to. I do not have to go to a church to be able to pray and say, "I believe in you. I worship you, and I love you." Even today, if I am out in the bush walking or looking for something, I will sit down and I will pray. And that does not mean that I am a very religious person, but I believe that is something I have to do. To be thankful for all the gifts, for all the good things that happened in my life. The not-so-good things I learned to live with, with the help I got from the Higher Power. Now it came to a point where I could live with them. I do not have to feel so guilty about them. I get that from being out in nature, where I see that everything grows from the smallest bud to the leaf, to the four leaf clover. I see the grass and the trees that blow, the birds that fly, the sky, the clouds that move. It is all alive; it is all a part of what I am and what I believe in. That is what helps me. I could be driving down the road and I pray to the Higher

Power for guidance and to make things better for me. Sometimes the everyday living problems are agonizing like what I have now.[284] You might not see it, but I feel it. I cannot go and lie down and cry and sleep and hope it goes away. I have to keep on going forward and try to live my life to the fullest, to try and accept and deal with the issues that are coming.

Why would I want to hurt the people that I love? Now that I am at the turning point of wanting to make things right. This is something that I have to make good. This is something I have to stop doing. Now I am clear, I am aware of things, good and bad, wrong or right. This is bad, and this is wrong. To hurt somebody that you care for and to scare your kids in the process, I do not want to do that. I have thought about it, and thought about it. There have to be other ways to deal with it instead of getting all up in arms and boxing. I thought of talking about it, talking it over, not even making it into an argument, trying to get you to understand me. You tell me what you think is wrong, and I will tell you what I think is wrong. Then maybe we can come together. You will get a little of what you want, and I will get a little of what I want. We can agree. It is not going to be a one-sided thing. You are a woman, I am a man, and you do not put me down. If I am wrong, I will admit it. I am not going to try to make you believe that I am right when I know I am wrong. I will be the first one to admit it. Why am I going to fight you over something that says that I could be wrong and you are right? I am not going to get to that point where I am going to punch you out just to convince you that I am right and you are wrong.

This book I am going to write will leave a legacy that will tell the story of where I was bad, but went towards the good. It will leave nothing out, not just tell the good side. There are always two sides to a story, and I would like to tell the truth, not to hide anything from anybody. If I was part of that bad thing, then I was part of it. I have nothing to hide. I cannot go and lie down and cry and sleep and hope it goes away. I have to keep on going forward and live my life. I have to keep trying to live my life to the fullest, accepting and dealing with the issues that are going to be coming. I cannot go and lie down and cry and sleep and hope it goes away. I have to keep on going forward.

I want to give back what I learned. I am saying this on tape for the people I plead with. It is a disease. It is not something you were born with. It is a disease that you have. As for being destructive not only to yourself but to other people around you, there are people you can care for. Why do you do that? You need to grow and try to figure things out within yourself. That is how life starts.

DNS were the best years of any government that I have ever seen. They did things for people like they were supposed to. They treated more or less people equally; it did not matter the colour of your skin and mine. We were on a level playing field. It was towards the end of DNS years that I sobered up. Then with DNS leaving, the money started disappearing. The people that were trained during DNS years were able to work. Lots of them are still able to work. There are a handful of them. They were trained carpenters. We have trades people here. A few plumbers here were trained during the DNS days. DNS did good things. They trained people and were really good to people. Then as the people who were trained during DNS years got a little older and started retiring, the younger ones were not being trained to replace them. Now you have got a whole bunch of young people that do not have any skills.

I can write. I like to write, put stuff on paper, and then study it later. When I finish, it makes a lot of sense. I do my chores and then I sit down and write what I think and what I see so I can relate back to it later. When I see or hear something a little bit different, I go back and think, "I was wrong here; I have to fix this one."

As time goes on, I have become sentimental. There is a lot of sentimental value in the love that you have for people. It is so precious, so lovable; it is such a good thing, I get that from growing older. I feel the need to love, to care, to share with everybody and anybody that I care for. I talked to my friend from Flin Flon not that long ago. She said she wanted me to go and spend some time with her, but with all the things happening I cannot right now. But I am going to have to make time and spend a day or two or three with her because the last time we talked was about a month ago. She said, "We need to talk." We need to sit down, we need to talk, and we need to share a lot of the things. Over the years, we have shared a lot of the things. We talked about a lot of the things. We helped each other. Whenever she needed help, I helped her. And when I needed help, she helped me out.

A person has to change from within first to who they want to be. Then you will be able to get away from this bad thing that you are living over here and be a better person because if you go into something, you have to go into it one hundred percent, or a hundred and fifty percent. For you, and not for you as my wife, but for me first. I have to be first. And the reason that I feel that I have got to be first is because if I cannot change myself, how am I going to change you?

When I was the Plant Supervisor at the Island Falls site, the superintendent and I had it out a couple of times because of the way they were treating people. I said, "This is not sixty years ago. This is today. Things have changed and you cannot treat people like that. People have to be treated fairly. If one person gets to do something as a privilege, then another person should be treated the same way. It started to change. The guy that I worked under was very prejudiced. You could get along with him good if you were a good employee. The ones that were not so good still produced; they were still steady people working there. He was prejudiced. That is what he and I fought over so many times. Then towards the end, he started to see where I was coming from and he more or less started to accept that. Things were changing.

We had meetings with the head people from Regina, and I gave them pointers of what it was like, and what it should be like. They liked that because they did not know. What they knew is what they knew about tree people, the South Africans. They were treating the employees from Sandy Bay the same way when they took over the Island Falls power house. They knew not to give their Aboriginal employees an inch. Saskatchewan Power[285] more or less carried that attitude of treatment of employees and still does to a certain extent today. But it is much better.

It was with construction that people would get jobs here. When I was here, I negotiated with SIAST[286] to have training for people that worked here. I also brought in the training that you needed to be an operator there, or an electrician or a heavy duty mechanic, whatever they needed. I pushed and I fought for that. I got it. They never even got northern living allowance[287], while people that were flying here from Nipawin[288] to work on a weekly basis were getting it. That was the other thing I fought for. It took a while, six months maybe. They all got northern living allowance. Today they still have it. And the training? We now have electricians from Sandy Bay. We have qualified and certified heavy duty mechanics. We have the operators. There are twenty young people that are trained, that could go anyplace and work. That is because of the work that I did. Nobody realises that. But I fought for that; I worked for that. Lots of people on the outside know that; most people on the outside know that, but yet the people here do not, or they are too ignorant to want to know. When they had that catering company, we catered for five years in construction. We created the Camps Development Corporation so we could bid for contracts in anything that came along. I got people trained with SIAST to get them certification, manager certified. We trained our cooks and our janitors, so we could provide anything that you need to operate a camp. Everybody got certified because we cost shared: Government of Saskatchewan, SIAST and the Community of Sandy Bay. We put that together. My idea of putting that together was not just for here. I was more or less thinking of the mines and big construction sites where they start these big projects; they are going to be there for four or five years. I figured we could fit into these jobs. With my crew of people we would be able to run a camp to cater to these people. But when I left, somebody else took over at the municipal office. They did not know how to run it. They did not know how to negotiate contracts, still today they do not. People accept that, and nobody realises all the hard work I put into that for the people that I worked with when I was the supervisor on the Island Falls site and the Mayor of Sandy Bay.

After I could not work in construction any more, I started getting into politics. I was in the learning process. Today I am still learning because of all the things I know that make a difference. Now, wherever I go to different meetings, people approach me and say, "Where did you go to school?"

"I never went to school."

"It is in your speech." There is one guy from Pelican Narrows, the first time he heard me speak, he walked up to me after the meeting and said, "I like the way you talk." He said, "Where did you learn to talk like that?"

"I do not know. I did not go to school for it." The last time I saw him was in Southend. There was a meeting there and I spoke twice. After the meeting he came to me and he said, "From now on, I am going to call you the "Speaker of the House" because that is what I think you are. You have the expertise, you bring yourself across well, and I like that."

Today, WA and I have our problems. Whether she does not understand me or what, I do not know. I cannot blame her. She does not get into my head. It is not a case of wanting to be away from her all the time, but I have to do things that I have to do and sometimes I have no time for anything else. I feel the need to do whatever I need to do, and I do not have that much time to do it. I could go to La Ronge and live there but I would not be happy there. It is not because of La Ronge, and not because of where we are at. It is not because of her. It is because I do not have there what I need to do. I have to integrate with different people, to be involved here in different things. I have to be able to give them what I have. This is my saying, "This is what I have. I will give; I will pass it on, even though I do not think I can change anything in Sandy Bay." I have tried. It is going to cost me whatever it will cost me, and I have to pay that. I am the one that will be at the short end of the stick. I am going to suffer as the result of this. And what did I do it for? Who did I do it for? It would be nice if I could see results, immediate things that happen. I was a major player, and I am proud of those things, even though nobody else acknowledges them.

Now I go to Southend, to Deschambault, to Pelican Narrows, to Prince Albert, to Saskatoon, and to Vancouver to have these meetings. People listen to me when I speak, because I have something to offer. When Lorne Calvert was here in Pelican Narrows, I was invited to speak. The Chief invited me, saying, "I want you to do a presentation." I put a presentation together and I presented it to the Premier and his colleagues. I presented him with thoughts on trying to resolve the long-standing issue of compensation for the community of Sandy Bay.

I have been involved for about twenty-five years in trying to get something in terms of compensation or mitigation for the community of Sandy Bay. To Lorne Calvert, I said, "You know, for the last seventy years or seventy-five years since that dam was built, it has created power and generated millions of dollars as profit. Yet my people in the community of Sandy Bay and Pelican Narrows or Southend that are affected by this have never seen a penny coming back to the community. We ask for a donation from Sask Power[289] when we have something happening here and they either refuse or they send us fifty dollars. I would be ashamed to send somebody fifty dollars knowing full well that there is money being generated by the power that is being sold. You are extending your line to Pelican Narrows, to Points West, and places in between with power. You have got to be making money in order to do this. But what is that good to us? You are fluctuating our water every day. You are throwing stuff into our water although you say you do not. But we know full well that the oil from those generators drains into our river system and we have to live with that. You say that we are not entitled to anything. You are the Premier. You are a decision-maker, and I hope that you can make some good decisions that are going to be good for everybody, and put it to rest, and then we can all move on. I know you want development. You are part of Sask Power; it is an arm of the Provincial Government. Sask Power only gets a permit to operate from one year to the next. They cannot say that we are going to go and build a dam twenty miles up river, because that will be a five or ten year project. They have only got a permit; they do not have a licence for that. Your president knows that you cannot go on a long term project to upgrade what you have here because of the permit thing. You have a vested interest to resolve this issue and move on. We are not against development, but we want to be part of development. We do not want the back-breaking jobs and then when everything is dug, to be kicked out. We want to be able to train our young people in whatever development is happening so they will be there when the process is finished. That is what we want. Partnerships: relationships with development."

He agreed with me but we shall see what happens now. Now Sask Power has come forth and said, "We want to sit down with you." I am Chairman of the Impact Committee on the Hydro Issue at the local level and at the regional level. That is why the Chief wants me around all the time, because

I know what I am doing. He can rely on me; he can send me to look after this, and I will look after it.

That is something that holds me here. If it was not for my mother, I do not think I would even be here. My grandchildren are here too, so that makes my bond with Sandy Bay stronger because I do not wander where I will lose touch with them. For me, having grandchildren is just like having your kids all over again and I did not experience that when they were at that age. I missed a lot of that because of my drinking and fooling around. It is like getting a second chance to have kids and see kids grow. I love that and I appreciate that. I love spending as much time as I can with my grandchildren which is not very much at all. I am still doing a lot of different things. With WA being in La Ronge and me here, we can never seem to find the time together. I would like it where we could take the kids out together and go camping but now we are not getting along. I miss that very much. In a sense that is part of the bond.

When my mother goes, it will be tough. I treat my mother good, and I love her very much because I have learned so much from her. Today I am still learning from her because I take the time to go and sit with her, listen to her, and be patient enough to hear what she is saying.

She understands me or tries to understand me and we get along. We have our ups and downs. We have our arguments too, now and then, but nothing to a point where she is going to stay mad at me for six months or a year. We get into some hairy discussion about something, and then it is gone. That is the kind of relationship we have. In the community I am hoping that things could change and people could change and start realising, "Hey there are better things to do here if we can work together, like one happy family."

I cannot understand why there is such a housing shortage in these communities in the north when housing is a Federal responsibility. Why are they paying somebody else to get rich and making this poor man pay when he does not have anything? If housing was part of the treaty, why are not they provided with shelter? In my community, there are these young people with one kid or two kids that are living door to door, house to house, or even themselves sleeping outside because there is nothing.

The other thing that makes me mad is when Treaty Day was here, there was the Queen's servant there in a red suit[290] shaking your hand and handing you five dollars. I am ashamed to go and get that five dollars. One hundred and some years ago there was an agreement of renting land here. We agreed to be the custodians of this land, and we would get paid for the land and the reserves that are being taken. Today, the land is being clear-cut of its trees, the minerals that are being mined out and the lakes are being taken over for tourist outfitters for fishing and nobody wants to buy fur, although it is coming back a little bit now. They are now letting a forest fire burn unless it is in a twenty mile radius of a community. They have no vested interest in it, but there are trap lines and trappers. There are fish camps that will get burned as the result of it. But they have no vested interest in that because they cannot make money out of that, so they do not care. Let it burn! I am ashamed to go and get that five dollars that was offered over a hundred years ago for the use of the land. I see the land being raped and I am accepting five dollars for what is being done out here? I cannot agree with that. Yet people go there willingly. "I am going to get five dollars." What can you buy with five dollars? With the cost of living and the escalation of the economy, that should be five hundred or five thousand dollars, today's equivalent of the five dollar deal. When they did that, they never agreed to change that to what it is today. There was no clause for that. These are some of the things that I think about.

The lakes are being closed. One guy pays fifty dollars and he holds a lake as a "day-use" lake. I cannot go on there. You cannot go on there because he holds a day-use licence on that lake. I tried to do that. I tried to hold a few lakes up north that are good fishing. They said, "No."[291]

I said, "Why not?" He is taking the same resource that I want from that water. He can get a licence or a permit to hold that lake on a yearly basis. What about me? I want the fish from that lake. This guy owns fifty-sixty lakes because he has a plane; he flies these guys in there. I cannot change that. We are going to have to learn how to live with it. But until things start to change on a more equal basis, we cannot ever get away from that. And that is what it is like now.

You ran here, running away from your own people, and now you are going to treat me like they treated you? You are no better than they are. Like the ones that came here and started saying, "They are no good." You were treated like that. Do not take it out on me. I had nothing to do with it.

I have been married for thirty-seven years to one of your kind, and we have gotten along quite well. If we want to make ourselves better, and accept each other better, then we have got to stick it out no matter how much hurt it causes. We have to learn and grow, and set an example for the younger people. If we want to make something work, we could negotiate to a point where it is good for you and it is good for me and we can live with it. But if it is one sided, then I want no part of it. If I have to live by your rules, I cannot live by your rules. For me, there is nothing so hard that you cannot keep negotiating or trying to make it work. I look back at my parents and other people in this community, and I know that they made things work. Things were tough. But they were willing to make it work.

Sitting here today, I feel that that is what I need for the rest of my life. To be aware of the day, to enjoy life as it comes every day, whether it is good or bad.

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[263] The welfare (or Social Assistance) of today is an income program of last resort in Canada. It is a government service that provides money to individuals and families whose resources are inadequate to meet their needs and who have exhausted other avenues of support (Retrieved March 1, 2007 from http://www.ncwcnbes.net/htmdocument/ reportwelinc99/chap2_e.htm).

[264] The grandfather that HA is referring here is Peter Ballantyne, after whom the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation is named (Field notes, January 25, 2005). Siggins (2005) notes that Peter Ballantyne was Chief of the Peter Ballantyne Band from its beginning in August 1900 to his death in 1917 (p. 38, 221). The Chief or Headman, called the Okimāw, gained that position usually because he was the best hunter, the smartest, the most knowledgeable, the most generous, and sometimes the person with the strongest supernatural powers (p. 214).

[265] In his informal talks with me, HA disclosed that the ability to talk to the animals was a gift that was also given to him. HA told a story of how he went hunting once, in the winter. They had no meat; he needed to get something. He kept seeing caribou far away, too far to shoot. He followed them all day, until at the end of the day, nearing dusk, he reached the point where he had started out that morning, fairly close to home. He decided to go home; he was not

going to get anything that day. As he was walking along, he sensed a presence behind him, like someone or something watching him. He sat down, and covered himself with snow to his waist. The caribou were following him. He sat very still, waiting, until he could see their eyes. He shot the caribou; they needed the meat. He dressed them, and brought them home. It was a gift he had, a gift in the cultural way. He never abused the gift. He killed only what they needed and he made sure that all parts of the animal were used. He had this gift with caribou, with lynx, and with beaver (Field notes, January 2005). A member of the family also acknowledged that, when he was young, HA had influence over the animals that he hunted. In his interview, BR said, "He knew how the animals worked, how the animals moved, and he knew how to get them (BA's story, p. 423). The friend talked about his getting a lynx and bringing it home to commemorate his sobriety date each year. "One thing I remember is when he first sobered up, they had no food. But he was trapping, and he got a lynx. She cut it up and marinated it, and that was what they had to eat that day. But every year after that before his AA birthday he caught a lynx" (FD's story, 483)

[266] This grandfather was Cornelius Ballantyne, a son of Chief Peter Ballantyne (Siggins, 2005, p. 221; Field Notes, January 25, 2005).

[267] In 1668, Pierre-Esprit Radisson and Médard Chouart des Grosielliers, coureurs de bois or forest runners from New France, defected to the English, taking their knowledge of canoe routes, the intricacies of trading furs, and the peculiarities of Indian nations with them. When a British ship subsequently returned to the homeland with her hold full of valuable furs, Prince Rupert realised that they had a gold mine on their hands. On May 2, 1670, King Charles II granted a Royal Charter, giving them exclusive trading rights to Hudson Bay and its drainage basin, an incredibly huge area which became known as Rupert's Land. The Hudson's Bay Company sprang into being, with three trading posts established east of Hudson's Bay in a decade (Siggins, 2005, pp. 59-60). The Hudson's Bay Company was a Canadian icon until it was bought by foreign investors.

[268] In all of Canada, between 1857 and 1920, two hundred and fifty individuals, Cornelius Ballantyne among them, gave up their treaty rights in order to be enfranchised and obtain privately owned land (Siggins, 2005, p. 220).

[269] Quiring (2004) says that the Churchill River Power Company, a subsidiary of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company, built the first major northern dam at Island Falls on the Churchill River to supply power to the mine and mill at Flin Flon. Two very different and conflicting stories describe the process of establishing the dam. The official version of events says public hearings took place in 1928. The company then built the dam, which began operating in 1930. Saskatchewan issued a fifty-year licence. Virtually no Status Indians had settled in the Island Falls area prior to construction of the dam. Chief Cornelius Ballantyne tried to establish a reserve there prior to construction of the dam, but he was unsuccessful and interest in his project

faded after he died. With construction of the dam, Indians came seeking jobs, moving from the Pelican Narrows area to the new village of Sandy Bay near the dam site. The other version of the story, based on Aboriginal oral history, denies the fairness of the public hearings. It claims establishment of the reserve went ahead before the mining firm wanted to build the dam. Once the company spotted the prime Island Falls hydro site, Ottawa, which controlled Crown lands until 1930, took the reserve from the Indians. Government then claimed that the reserve never existed there but that it instead was located at Sturgeon Weir Indian Reserve, over a hundred miles to the southeast (p 84).

[270] Chief Cornelius Whitebear, second chief of the Peter Ballantyne Band, was chief from 1919 until his death in 1927 (Siggins, 2005, p. 224).

[271] This letter would likely have been written to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs located in Ottawa.

[272] The south tip of Reindeer Lake, Southend, is accessible by road and located 220 kilometres north of La Ronge, SK on Highway 102. La Ronge is about 400 kilometres from Sandy Bay, thus the distance by road to Southend from Sandy Bay is about six hundred twenty kilometres (Canada's Northwest Territories official explorers' map, n.d.). The distance from Southend, SK (located on the south tip of Reindeer Lake) to Sandy Bay, SK travelling along the Reindeer and Churchill Rivers, is estimated to be 180 kilometres (Canada's Northwest Territories official explorers' map, n.d.).

[273] HA's grandfather is buried at the original site of Sandy Bay, the site before people relocated to be able to work at the Island Falls dam and power plant.

[274] The Cree and Métis who were employed at the construction of the Island Falls dam were given some lumber (often scrap lumber) to build their cabins at the present site of Sandy Bay, a fair distance from the white community of Island Falls (Siggins, 2005, p. 87). Sandy Bay is located at the north-east end of the 125 kilometre Highway #135, approximately 190 kilometres from Flin Flon.

[275] Mooshim is a Cree word that means grandfather.

[276] The dialect of the Cree of this region, the th dialect, distinguishes them as Rock, Wood, or Woodland Cree (Siggins, 2005). Traditionally, they lived in the Precambrian shield and trapped, fished, and hunted. Their large animal was the moose.

[277] The community of Island falls, the Shangri-La of the north, was built to house the families of the people working at the Island falls dam and power plant. The community was reserved for white families only. Aboriginal people who were working at the plant were given lumber, usually scrap lumber, to build themselves a cabin with the stipulation that the cabins be built across the bay from the community of Island falls. The communities were completely segregated from each other, as were the recreational facilities (the facilities

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were for White people only), schools, stores, and other facilities (Siggins, 2005; Field Notes, January 2005; March 2005).

[278] The pronoun shifts from first to second to third person have been left as expressed by HA in the interview.

[279] The decision to move the entire family to Sandy Bay was very difficult. A government official came to visit the family at the trap line, and proposed to them that if they wished, they could move into Sandy Bay. When they moved into Sandy Bay, they would get a house, and they would get money that they would not have to work for, i.e., they would be paid to stay at home. Their children could also live at home while going to school in Sandy Bay. When the government agent left, the family met together and discussed his proposal. They decided that they were not going to accept it, that they would continue to stay at the trap line. Some time later, the government official came back again, and this time, revealed that if they did not accept the offer of moving to Sandy Bay as a family unit, thereby getting a house and money to live on, then the government was going to take their school-aged children from them, and those children would be put in Residential School. The agent left again, and the family met again, and decided that they were going to move into town with their children, to give up hunting, trapping, and fishing as a livelihood, and to accept the government's proposal. They had a choice to make, neither of them easy. Either they had to give up their way of life, or they had to give up their children. They could not give up their children. They moved into Sandy Bay and give up their livelihood (Field notes, January 25, 2005). The school in Sandy Bay was a rough crude log building with little equipment except the usual library books (Siggins, 2005, pp. 87-88).

[280] HA was on skid row in Winnipeg.

[281] HA talked to the Director of the alcoholism treatment centre in Sandy Bay. WA was employed there at the time, so the Director of the centre found a bed for HA at a nearby centre in The Pas, Manitoba.

[282] Standard tools are tools that are calibrated on the basis of inches (imperial system of measurement) rather than centimetres (metric system of measurement). Tools calibrated on the imperial system of measurement were used exclusively in Canada until the 1970s when a federal government paper on metric conversion in Canada was passed. Conversion to the metric system was incremental, but never completely enforced. Today, Measurement Canada is making no official effort to complete metric conversion (Retrieved on February 27, 2007 from http://members.shaw.ca/gw.peterson/timeline.html).

[283] A.A. meeting is a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

[284] HA was referring to an impending divorce from WA.

[285] The Island Falls dam and power plant was built by the Hudson's Bay Mining and Smelting Company and purchased by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation in 1981. Sask Power assumed operations of the power plant in

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1985. (Retrieved March 10, 2007 from http://saskpower.com/powerand environment/generation/islandfalls.html).

[286] SIAST is an acronym standing for the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, a college that provides skills and technical training in Saskatchewan. It has campuses in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Regina, and Prince Albert (Retrieved on December 13, 2006 from http://www.siast.sk.ca/siast/contactus/).

[287] Northern Living Allowance is an addition to regular wage added on in recognition of the higher cost of living in northern and remote areas of Canada.

[288] Nipawin is located on Highway 55, approximately 145 kilometres east of Prince Albert.

[289] The Saskatchewan Power Corporation is commonly known as Sask Power.

[290] An officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the dress uniform, a red suit.

[291] HA is referring to his unsuccessful attempt to be granted a permit for commercial fishing on a northern Saskatchewan lake. The documents, "Managing our Fisheries for Tomorrow," "The Saskatchewan Fishery: History and Current Status," and "Fisheries Fact Sheets" explain Saskatchewan Environment, Fisheries Management Plan Branch's policies regarding lake use. Crown lake use is allocated as follows: 1. Treaty use/subsistence use, 2. Resident use, 3. Commercial use. Permits are sold for resident use and commercial use based on the number of fish in the lake. Tourist outfitting and commercial fishing are both considered to be commercial use. All lakes are open to treaty and subsistence use first, then resident use. In terms of commercial use, small lakes may be allocated to one commercial activity, while the use of larger lakes may be granted to more than one commercial activity. Commercial use of a lake is allocated on a first come, first serve basis, based on who had use of it in the past year. If either a commercial fisherman or a tourist outfitter had been permitted to use the lake in the previous year, then commercial use of the lake would most likely be granted to him in the next year (http://www.se.gov.sk.ca/fisheries/Managing %20Our%20Fisheries%20for%20Tomorrow.pdf).

Appendix B: WA's (Wife's) Story

The first time that HA hit me was before we were married. We went to Sandy Bay. I was drinking then; we were both drinking. We were at his uncle's place, and we had been drinking quite a bit. HA was passed out. An ex-boyfriend came looking for me; I went with him. Then an ex-boyfriend tried to get me in bed, but I would not have any of it. I was pretty smart. I must have been on a diet; I had some Saccharin tablets in my purse. I faked a heart attack, and slipped a Saccharin tablet under my tongue, pretending it was a nitro-glycerine tablet. My ex-boyfriend fell for it and left me alone, so I went back to where my fiancé was passed out. When I got back there, HA was up and he wanted to know where I had been. His uncle must have told him who I had gone with. He slapped me and broke my glasses. I put it down to: he was drunk, I was drunk, and I never should have gone with my ex-boyfriend in the first place. HA told me the same thing. "If you had not made me mad, I would never have hit you. I am really sorry. I will never do it again." Part of my getting into the relationship with HA initially was my lack of self-esteem; part of it was not thinking I had much choice. HA was older, he was very good looking, he was very charming, and he was interested in me.

HA is a male version of his mother, and as he has gotten older, he has gotten more and more like his mom. He is like her in body structure, personality, physical features, and a lot of his attitudes. It is incredible how much he is like her. He is very close to her. A younger brother was born in 1950. Shortly after that, their father started being hospitalised for being sick with tuberculosis. HA and his older brother were ten and twelve, so they were of the age that they worked with their dad. When their dad was too sick to work, they took over many of his responsibilities. HA and his older brother took on the surrogate parent role for the rest of the kids.

HA was more like his dad when he was younger in a lot of his behaviours. His father used to disappear for days at a time. He would take what money there was, go play cards, or go to Winnipeg. I heard a lot of stories about him jumping on a fish plane and disappearing. I can see that HA has a lot of his dad's behaviours.

"When I first met HA's mother, she did not want us to get married. She said, 'You do not belong here. You should go home. You have no business here. You are not marrying my son because no son of mine is marrying an Anglican. Our sons are marrying Catholics.' She never said it was because I was white. It was because I was not Catholic, it was because I did not belong; it was because I was rich. She had this notion that my mom and dad must be rich because my dad worked all the time. He had a steady job and two kids, so he must be rich.

HA's father was pretty reasonable about our impending marriage. He said to HA, "You are the one who has to live with her. It is your business; you are a man. It is up to you to make your choice."

My mom never said it was because HA was an Indian. He was nine years older than I was, so "He is too old for you. You have a better education than he does, so the educational difference is too great." She did not bring up the religion piece, she brought up the fact that he was older, she brought up the educational difference; she brought up the fact that he did not have a steady job and that he drank too much. Those were her objections. She never, ever once said it was because he was an Indian. The objection with my dad was that HA did not work all the time; he did not supporthis family.

The second time that HA hit me was three weeks before we got married. He had been drinking. He was drunk, and he wanted to eat. I was not drinking but he was drinking with his mom and dad. I fixed him a plate just the same as everybody else had, and he decided it was dog food. He got mad and he threw it at me and accused me of feeding him dog food. He came after me, hit me, and his dad grabbed him. His dad pulled him off me, held him down, and told me to get out of there. His dad was not a big man but his dad pulled him off. He told me, "Get out of here. Get your jacket and go. Run." I grabbed my jacket and HA was struggling on the floor, and his dad was having a hard time holding him back. I kicked HA in the groin as I ran out the door.

I had this idea that once we were married, everything was going to be fine because this is what he told me. It was nice to believe the fairy tale but the fact that he was the one that kept telling me the fairy tale made it even better.

When we were married, there was no alcohol at our wedding because we did not tell anybody we were getting married, and in those days, it was home brew. We had not told anybody ahead of time that we were getting married, so nobody had any time to make up a batch to get ready. It was not a money day, so there was not much booze in the community. After the wedding, and after the dance, we went visiting to somebody's place. HA had a bottle or two of beer. My boots were really wet and my feet were cold. His aunt told him, "You had better take her home and put her to bed, because she is going to get sick." So he was sober for the whole wedding, he had only those two beers, which was nothing. He was supposed to leave the next day to go out to work, but the weather was bad, so he could not leave. That was why we got married on the 13th instead of the 14th of February. We would have gotten married on Valentine's Day, but he was supposed to fly out to work.

Four months later, we were living in Winnipeg, his uncle came to the city, and they went and got drunk. It was his uncle's fault. He did not try to hit me that time, but I could not face the rejection. I took an overdose of aspirin, and oh, did I ever get sick!

I was always looking for a reason why he behaved the way he did and I was always assuming that it was my fault, that somehow I was responsible. I remember quite clearly, when we were first married, those first three or four weeks. We were living at my parent's place in Flin Flon; he went out drinking and I could not figure it out because he said, "You know, if you are my wife, then I know, having you as my wife, then I do not need to drink anymore, then I will have everything I need." I was nineteen and I was naive enough to believe it. When he did drink, I could not figure out what it was, so it had to be something I was doing.

Over the course of the next few months, he was drinking because we were living in Flin Flon. So we moved to Winnipeg, because that was going to make it better. Then, it was because we were living with BR and SA, so then we got a place of our own and that was going to make it better. In 1969, we lived about six months in an apartment. I remember one fight in that apartment, and HA had just flipped right out. I do not remember what triggered it. He was drunk. He ripped the phone out of the wall. I hit him back that time, and then I hid under the bed. He was sitting down on the floor with his back up against the wall. He stood up, and it was an all metal-framed bed. He lifted it right up against the wall. When I was pregnant with SN, we moved back to Flin Flon and he was born. SNA was born in May of 1970, and he never laid a hand on me through the whole pregnancy.

The worst one was in 1972, which was the time that I charged him. We were separated, and the police had said, "Get a baseball bat. You get your neighbour to lock you in at night. Then when he comes around, he will think you are not there. If he does try and come in the door, hit him on the head with a baseball bat and phone the cops."

SA was there. BR was visiting somebody; there was me and SA, her two boys, and SN. HA and BR came in. I was sitting at the table. HA came around and he stood in front of me, and he said, "Can I come home now?"

I said, "No." He attacked me. I was pregnant with DR; I do not think he knew; I do not even know if I knew for sure. I was sitting there, and the next thing I knew I was on the floor. I had a big bruise on my back, because he hit me so hard. He blacked both my eyes. One blow right in the face and I hit the floor, and I had gone into the foetal position to protect our baby. He hit me on the back. BR had an arm in a cast, and he was trying to stop him. I crawled outside. SA had to grab SNA because SNA tried to jump on his dad.

The police took my statement. They took SA's statement; they took BA's statement. All three statements were that he had walked in the house, asked a question, and then attacked me. Later in court, they read the charge. "In the course of a family fight, the defendant struck his common-law wife, giving her a black eye. The accused regretted the incident, he was very drunk at the time, does not remember doing it and he is pleading guilty." I just sat there. Because this was 1972, common-law marriages were not recognised. We were legally married and I had made that clear, that we were married. The judge gave him a sixty-dollar fine, and thirty days to pay, and that was it.

HA phoned me that night and I answered the phone. He said, "You really thought you got me. You thought you were so smart. You thought you were going to get me; you thought you were going to send me to jail. Well, you did not." Then he hung up. His voice was just cold, ice cold. The cruel side of him that I had never seen before scared me.

Once I had been hit a few times, I would not say anything because I was afraid of triggering a fight. He would push me, maybe slap me and I would not say anything. Sometimes he would talk to himself, calm himself down enough, and then he would go and pass out. He would do that, I guess it was the burst of energy that he had to get rid of. He claimed he did not remember any of it.

In 1974, I realized that I could use the violence; that I was also participating in it. I knew how to make him explode in order to release the tension. I had felt it building and building. I remember thinking as I walked up the stairs that I would not have to say too much and he would explode, hit me, and then he would go to sleep. The pattern was already established. I said the things that triggered him. He exploded: grabbed me by the hair, pulled quite a bit of hair out, and hit me a couple of times in the face. Then I went into the bedroom. He passed out on the bed. I did not wash any of the blood off my face, just left it. I deliberately left the blood on my face, I deliberately fell asleep with the shirt that he had ripped, and I left the hair on the floor. I went to bed with my back to him and in the morning, SNA had to go to school. I just gave him an elbow, and said, "Get him up for school." He got up, got SNA his breakfast, got him dressed, and sent off to school. I just stayed in bed. He got DR set up with her breakfast, and her cartoons. Then he came to the bedroom, and when I heard him come back, I rolled over so he could see. He just looked, because he did not remember any of it. I had dried blood on my face; I had a black eye. My shirt was all ripped, and I had some marks on my neck. I just rolled over and looked at him. He did not say anything, he just looked. I do not remember for sure, but I probably said, "Yeah, this is what you did, now get out of here." I threw him out. He left; he was not going to argue.

It was always a power struggle to see who was going to be in control. If I triggered him and he blew up, then he went into guilt and remorse and I had the power. Because then what I did was I turned to him and said, "Look at what you did. Now get out of here." I was in charge. I had control of my environment again. That empowered me. Later, I would get bored to a certain extent because I was not used to the calmness. As much as I hated it, I was used to functioning in the high tension and the chaos. Then he would want to come back. He would be nice, he would beg, he would plead, he would cajole, he would flatter, he would do all those types of things. He was attentive, and patient, and considerate, and everything. Again, I was in a position of power. Eventually, I would let him come back, and he would come back. That is when I really became aware that there was a pattern to what happened. Then the cycle would start again and I began to realise that I played a part in it.

By 1975, I hardly ever went out with him because he would drink to a certain point, then I knew that there was nothing I could do, he was going to get violent. It did not matter if we were with people or if we were alone. The threat of the violence was always there, the potential was always there so I was always trying to figure out how to do the dance that would keep it at a minimum.

He quit drinking in 1975 for the first time. He just quit, and he was miserable. He managed to stay dry for about six weeks. I was glad when he started drinking again because he was just the most miserable person on the face of this earth. In 1976, he quit again but that time he was actually nice. He took the kids places, took me places. We would go out and do things and he was pleasant to be around, and he was a lot of fun. That was a nice six weeks. In 1977, he went into the Rehab in Sandy Bay and actually sobered up for almost eighteen months.

Back in 1968, prior to our marriage, my mother-in-law had told me, on the days that there was money in the community, "You lock the door, keep the kids in the house at supper time, and you do not let them out and you do not let anybody in because everybody will be drunk, and it is dangerous." I did not know anything, because I was not something that I was used to. She was right. You saw drunks all the time. If you saw adults out on the street, they were drunk. You would see kids out on the street until three or four; they would be out all night because there was no safe place for them to go. It was that bad.

There was no housing in Sandy Bay, one of the reasons why I did not want to go back there. HA always wanted to go back, but I would never want to. Then in 1977, when he went there and sobered up I thought, "Hmmmmm. If you can actually go there and get sober, then maybe there have been some changes in the community." When I went, there were a lot of people who were not drinking. There was the Rehab Centre, there were people going into the Rehab Centre for treatment. The Child Care Centre was there so the kids could stay in the Child Care Centre. There was an A.A.[292] group going, there was a Round-Up[293], people had jobs, and there was decent housing. The University of Regina was doing a lot of community development and a lot of social development. There were a lot of community boards and organizations that started. There was a lot of stuff going on. A big factor in that was DNS.

In 1979, he went to Detox at Larson House in Saskatoon as well as the treatment centre in Sandy Bay. In 1980, he went for treatment to Rosaire House in The Pas, and has not had a drink since. When he was sober, he never got violent with me. Instead, there were a few times that he blacked out and beat up somebody else. Every time he was violent with me, it was alcohol-related.

He would go out and get drunk. My belief was, "Who would ever want me anyway?" My self-esteem was low, so I ate. I would stay home; get a big bag of tacos and a pound of butter. I would sit and watch TV. That was my Friday night. The kids would go to bed; I would sit and watch the old black and white TV, two channels in Winnipeg, and eat nacho chips dipped in butter. The next day I would be so sick, because butter was my comfort food. Oh, would I have a bellyache! So he would be hung over. He would have his hangover; I would have my hangover. The weight just kept piling on, and piling on and piling on. Part of me knew that I needed to do something for my health. I weighed two hundred eighty-six pounds, and was five foot three inches tall. I recognized I could not continue like that. I was too young, I had young children, I was working, and it was physically demanding work. I could not continue that way so I started looking at alternatives.

By 1976, I had already made the decision that I needed to have surgery. I was so grossly obese and I thought, "If I were not so fat, he would not do this. If I were not so fat, he would not treat me the way he treats me. He would not drink the way he does; he would not hit me." I went and saw one doctor about surgery and gave him my medical history, including telling him that I once had hepatitis. He told me that, with a history of hepatitis, I was not a Student for surgery because liver damage was always a possibility after the surgery. Then, I met someone who told me that she had that surgery after having liver damage from hepatitis. I thought, "Well, they did it on her, why cannot they do it on me?" I found out who her doctor was, and went to him. It was fifty-fifty. Fifty percent was health reasons, but fifty percent was to stop the violence. I thought, "When I am more physically attractive, he will have to stop."

I had the surgery done in October of 1976. I remember talking to HA about having it done, and he did not want me to. He was afraid of surgery. He was afraid I might die. He did not think it was necessary; he never said that my weight was an issue. In fact the opposite, he said one of the reasons that he picked me was because of my size. The weight issue was not in him, it was in me. That was my view, not his.

It was major surgery. I remember coming out of it. I knew that HA was scared of me having the surgery. I remember coming out of the anesthetic. They kept me in intensive care for twenty-four hours, and before they had even gotten me out of bed, I was doing leg exercises. I worked as a nurse! I knew about pneumonia, I knew about blood clots, I knew about all the risks, and even when I was unconscious I was exercising my legs and I was moving around in the bed. Once I regained consciousness, the first thing I asked them to do was to phone him and tell him that I was okay. Because I knew he was worried.

The week that I was in the hospital, he came up to see me only twice because he did not like hospitals. I look back at that and I think, "Man, I have never thought about it, but it did not bother me." I was able to justify it with, "Well, he has got to take care of the kids. He is working and we do not have a car. He would have to ride the bus and all this crap." Then I think, "No, he still could have been there more than once, more than twice. I was in the hospital about seven or eight days."

I went through the whole process with the determination that I was going to come out of it fine. When I got home, I was going to get back on my feet quickly, and I was going to be back at work within six weeks. I was not going to have any complications. I did not. I was at work in six weeks, and my weight loss was steady. Over the eighteen months after the surgery, from October of 1976 to July of 1978, I lost one hundred thirty two pounds. I went down to one hundred thirty-six pounds. I lost almost half of my body weight over that time period. I have pictures of myself taken at different times through there. The more weight I lost, the less my feet hurt. I could buy clothes; I could get clothes. Somebody could give me clothes, and I could actually wear them. I became quite involved in that whole process. I was not paying as much attention to HA and to what he was doing. In that time period he went to Sandy Bay, he sobered up, and he stayed sober for about eighteen months.

His actually getting sober there was a reverse of the usual process because he used to go there and get drunk. I decided to go see what the difference was. The kids and I went there for the summer. I was quite amazed, because there were so many people now sober that I remember being drunk, I would never stay in Sandy Bay before that. I would not go there for a visit; I did not want to take the kids there. I had taken SNA there once or twice, but I would not have anything to do with the community because the drinking was so bad. I have heard people saying that it was ninety-five percent alcoholism. HA always wanted to go back, but I would never would. When he went there and sobered up I thought, "Hmm. If you can actually come here and get sober, then maybe there have been some changes in the community. When I went, there were a lot of people who were not drinking. It was amazing the number of people that I had known as drinkers, and some of them as very abusive drinkers that had become sober. Earlier, there had not been any decent housing. Now there was the chance of having a decent house, so we stayed there for two months to see what it was like, and then we decided that we would move back. I told HA that I could live there.

We went back to Winnipeg, packed up everything, and came back. We had a little house with no running water. It had two bedrooms and another bedroom in a lean-to. The house consisted of a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms in the main part of the house, and then the other bedroom in the lean-to. In our bedroom, we had a dresser and a double bed. In SNA's bedroom, there was a single bed, and a dresser. In the living room, there was a

Valley Comfort stove, a hide-a-bed, and a TV on a cabinet. There might have been an end table in there. In the kitchen, there was a fridge and stove, some cupboards, and table and chairs. Then there was the porch. The house was not really nicely built or anything. It had no running water.

We ran the Child Care Centre, so we stayed there from Sunday to Friday. For the time period, from six o'clock Sunday night to six o'clock Friday night, HA, the kids, the dog, and I lived at the Child Care Centre. We took care of whatever kids were in there. We were house parents, but it was me that did it all. We went home to our house on the weekends, so that is why living in such a little place was not all that bad. We were there from Friday night at six to Sunday night at six.

On Friday, HA would go over in the morning, he would make fire, and he would make fire throughout the day. When we got home at six o'clock, the house was warm. Then, he would just have to keep the fire going for the weekend. Then we were gone back to the Child Care Centre. At that time I remember that when I got up there, I got involved with the local school board. I kept losing weight and more weight, and more weight and I started getting active in the community. There was not much to do socially. I got on the local school board more for something to do than anything else. My ex-boyfriend was on the board. That was fun. I thoroughly enjoyed it because I was bugging him. I had gone out with him for a while, and then I quit seeing him. Then HA and I had started going together, and my ex-boyfriend would come and try to talk me into going back with him. I told him, "No. I have a much better boyfriend now." So, I did anything that I could do to rub his nose in what he had lost. Part of my interest in community education was just to give me a little fun.

I do not know what HA thought. HA knew that my ex-boyfriend was on the school board. It was not something that we ever talked about. He never said anything. I used to always get all cleaned up and fixed up before I would go to the meetings. I did not just wash my face, and go in my dirty old clothes. I think that there was a game being played there. I know I was playing a game there. Part of it was, "Now that I am skinny, you had better watch it. I am now attractive. I am managing, I am functioning quite well. You have not beaten me down."

In the summer of 1978, Mom and Dad came up to Sandy Bay for a visit with us. They spent about three weeks with us and then the kids and I went home to Flin Flon with them. HA would not go. He did not want to go on holidays; he was too busy fishing. The kids and I went on our own. I was tired. In the spring of 1978, I had a really bad bowel infection. That was one of the things with the surgery: every so often, I would get a severe bowel infection. That was the first one I had, and it was awful. I had frothy bowel movements, just watery. I knew that my electrolytes were out of balance because I had this odd taste in my mouth. My skin was dry and I felt crappy. I finally went to the doctor. The doctor told me I had a bowel infection, put me on medication, and within three or four days, I felt better.

When I went out west with Mom and Dad, I was watching TV and Mom said to me, "Man, you are getting fat. Are you pregnant again?" I said, "No, I just bloat a lot," because I bloated so badly for a long time after the surgery. I would bloat up really badly, and I just said, "It is whatever I have eaten." Then I started thinking, "I do not remember when my last period started." I thought about it a lot, and realised that it had been at least three months since I had my period. I no longer thought about that, because I had the Dalkon Shield inserted in 1973.

In 1977, I heard that they were taking it off the market because there was a high incident of maternal death. When a woman got pregnant with the Dalkon Shield in place, the dual filament string, which was part of the device, tended to act like a wick to transmit bacteria from the vagina to the uterus, resulting in a septic abortion and an infection that killed some women. I remembered hearing about that, as well as something about the shield being taken off the market. At the time, I thought, "Well, I will deal with that later; it is not a big deal. Besides if I get pregnant I do not want another baby so then I will have a double reason for an abortion. I have got to have an abortion because keeping it with the shield will kill me and then I do not want another kid anyway."

So there I was, probably pregnant, with no idea of how long I had been pregnant. I spent quite a bit of time thinking about it, and realised that I did not remember having my period since May. It was now August. I thought about the window for therapeutic abortions, and realised that I was getting to the end of it. I remember coming back to Sandy Bay and telling HA, because he had met us somewhere and picked us up. We talked. I told him that I thought I was pregnant again and what I was worried about in terms of the pregnancy. He was quite distant, sort of disconnected from the whole process.

I went up to the clinic, and then I spent probably three weeks running back and forth to the clinic because the doctors come up twice a week. First, I went to the nurses, and got it confirmed, "Yes, I was pregnant." Next, I told the nurses what my concerns were. I told them that I needed to know the risks. They told me that the shield had probably fallen out, but I saw the first doctor that came to town. The doctor that I spoke with said, "Oh, I quit using those Dalkon Shields because I could never get them in. Then, I could not remove them."

I was thinking, "Well great, you cannot take them out on purpose, and you guys are telling me not to worry, mine has probably fallen out? I do not think so." I spent probably three weeks going back and forth to the clinic, nagging at the nurses, telling them that I had to go out for an ultrasound. I needed to know if this Dalkon Shield was still in place. If it were still in place, it could kill me. I needed to know what my risks were. I knew that if I needed a therapeutic abortion, then I was getting to the end of the window, it was getting late in the pregnancy.

I remember the doctors coming to Sandy Bay and saying, "Oh, I forgot to check." By then, of course, I was getting into a real emotional state because I was scared and because I had no support. I was panicking more, and more, and more, and more. Finally, in early September, they sent me to Saskatoon. I had an ultra sound done, and found out that the Dalkon Shield had fallen out. I talked to a gynaecologist whose main concern was pregnancy after my intestinal bypass surgery. The bypass surgery had basically created a mal-absorption syndrome. My main questions were, "If I am pregnant and the Dalkon Shield is in place, then what is going to happen?" The only thing he could tell me about the Dalkon Shield was that it must have fallen out when I had the really bad bowel infection.

I remember coming home and being quite happy. I was finally off the roller coaster. I was pregnant. I was healthy. There was no risk. The Dalkon Shield was gone. Another baby? What the heck. I was four or four and a half months pregnant and I had begun to show. Another baby was not so bad. I came home after having come to a resolution on that, and I was all excited. HA's response was, "This is no big deal." He was disconnected from the whole process. The kids were excited.

Shortly after I came home from having the ultra sound done, HA went to Winnipeg with a friend, and they went on a hunting trip, and disappeared for three days. At some level I knew that there was something very wrong going on because this was really strange behavior. He came home on a Sunday. He phoned me on the Saturday and gave me some cock and bull story about how they had gone hunting, had broken down, and were out in the bush. They could not get to a phone, but they were all right. He came home the next day. When he walked in the house, I knew something was wrong. I think I knew that he was fooling around, but I could not face it because that was one thing that up to that point, I did not think he had ever done. He had done lots of stuff, but he had never had an affair as far as I knew. Nobody had ever told me, and it had never come up. I had never had any evidence of it, ever. When he came in that night, I saw him through the window when he was coming in, and I knew then that there was something. We never talked about it, never said anything about it, because we just did not talk about those things. The unwritten rule was, "You do not ask about it, you do the silent treatment."

On Monday morning, there was a pink stain on the bed about the size of a quarter. I remember looking at it, and wondering what it was, but I did not want to address it. I got everybody up. SNA had to go to school and DR was in school too. HA had to go to work. I got everybody up, and mobile. Everybody was gone, I went to the bathroom, and I thought that something happened. Again, this was not something that I wanted to deal with. Later in the morning, I went to the bathroom and I felt a gush. There were definite blood stains in the toilet bowl, and there were blood stains on my panties. When HA came home for lunch I told him, "I think I have to go up and see the nurse because I am bleeding. Something is not right."

I went to the clinic, and the nurses sent me out right away. I got into the hospital in Flin Flon, and they put on a heartbeat monitor. They could not hear anything, but my bowel sounds were very loud because of the surgery. It was hard to tell if there was a heartbeat. They could not hear it. By three in the morning, I used the bedpan and I thought I had passed a blood clot. When the nurse came in to take the pan, she told me that I had passed the baby. I did not really feel like a baby; it felt like a clot. They took me down to the operating room, put me under, and did a D and C. The next morning when I woke up, they told me that I could go home later that day. I phoned home, and told HA what had happened. He came in to pick me up, had a friend with him, and they hunted rabbits on the side of the road all the way home. I had nobody to talk to, and I remember I was more worried about him and the kids than I was about myself. I went home to try and take care of everybody else. I explained it to the kids, and phoned my mom and dad and told them. That was hard, and that was the 18th of October.

Around about Halloween, HA went to Winnipeg because he wanted to trade his vehicle. One of our family members called and told me that he was drinking again. I went down to get him because I can remember thinking, "Well if he is drunk, at least I know what I am dealing with. All the other stuff up to then, I could not figure out. I would not admit that he was fooling around. I would not look at it. Yet, I knew that was what it was. I went to Winnipeg on the bus. I had been in the hospital because my emotions. I was just wacky. I remember saying, to the doctor, "I just need a couple of day to rest. I just cannot handle things." I went into the hospital for a couple of days. The doctor was going to write me a prescription for something, but I said, "No, I do not want any medication."

I went down to Winnipeg on the bus. I was going to get HA, and I was going to get the truck, bring it home. Now that he was drunk, I knew what I was dealing with. It was not until I walked up to the door, knocked on the door and a woman answered and would not let me in that I knew what was going on. He was having an affair.

I did not bring him back to Sandy Bay. He would not come with me, but he gave me the keys to the truck. I got the keys to the truck, and drove the truck home. I had been in Winnipeg a couple of days; I was exhausted, driving at two, three in the morning. His brother was with me, but I only let him drive for about twenty minutes of time because he did not drive much then. I was coming home on two-dollar tires, getting back to Sandy Bay, and then having two kids to take care of. I had a truck that I did not know if there were payments to be made on, but that was not important. I had no job, so I had to go on welfare. I drove to Creighton and went to the welfare office. The worker was a guy who was in Alcoholics Anonymous, and had been in the program for a few years.

I remember going to the building in Creighton and driving around it about three times. I was scared of going into that building, and saying I needed help. I was just terrified. When I walked in, the SAP[294] worker told me afterwards that, "You had such an air of confidence I never would have guessed. You were very sophisticated." That was the external; that was the one hundred thirty-two pound me. I had the external appearance of having it all together, but inside I was an absolute wreck.

Two weeks before HA started his affair; his sister had asked me about a woman in the community whose husband had an ongoing relationship with another woman, "What would you do if you were in her position? How would you handle it?" I said I would not put up with it; I would be gone like a shot.

Then I was in that very position, and I was doing exactly the opposite. "So what is wrong with me? Why am I stuck, why cannot I do anything, why am I such a mess?" I was destroyed. Then I said, "God will save us." I would do this fluctuating with my mood swings. I would have all the faith in the world and everything would be fine, and then I would go down into the depths of despair. I went to church; I paid Father to say mass. I was really grasping at straws. I figured if HA just came home, and stayed in Sandy Bay then everything would be all right. I would have control of him; things would get, back to normal. None of it worked. I do not remember getting any comfort from church. What I wanted was to get a miracle. Nothing happened. I started drinking.

One episode of violence occurred shortly after I started drinking in Sandy Bay, and I was just so mad. We had this red truck and we were drinking at the house. He was getting mad at me, and he said he was going back to

Winnipeg. I do not remember what I was not doing that he wanted me to do, or thought I should do, or I was giving him a rough time or something. Then he said, "I am going back to Winnipeg, I am going to go live with my girlfriend, because at least she does not treat me like this."

My response was, "You may be going, but you are not taking that truck." The truck was the focal point. I had a set of keys to the truck. I had to go out, get in the truck, and pull it out of the driveway on to the road. He came running after me. I was not taking this truck; he was going to have this truck. I was driving up the road, he jumped in front of it, he jumped on the truck, got on the hood, and kicked in the windshield. I was not stopping, so he kicked in the windshield, crawled in the truck through the windshield, hit me, and made me turn the truck around and park it back in the yard.

The next thing I remember was the next morning. The two of us were laughing about this. Here was this truck with a kicked in windshield and him calling a tow truck to get it towed into Flin Flon to get the windshield replaced. He did not have a job; I did not have a job. The cost of the tow into Flin Flon and a new windshield was over four hundred dollars, and we were laughing about it, as if it was funny. Laughing, joking about it, and drinking. I remember thinking that this drinking was not a good idea.

When I decided to move to Saskatoon, it was because I could not stand living in Sandy Bay anymore. The pain was too great; it hurt too much to live there. Saskatoon was far enough away, so HA and I went to Saskatoon and found a place to rent. Two weeks later, we sold everything we did not want, loaded what we wanted on a one-ton garbage truck, covered it with tarps and left.

We got as far as Pelican Narrows, and HA went looking for a drink. The best man at our wedding was with us. I got so angry with HA that I told the man with us, I am taking this truck myself." He said, "You cannot do that."

I said, "Well, I am doing it."

"Well, I am going with you." So now there was the best man from our wedding, the two kids and me, and I was driving this one ton truck. It was a standard. I only had my license for three or four months. I had never driven a truck like this, and there I was. HA got a ride from somebody, and he chased us. I pulled over because he came up behind us.

He came along on the driver's side. I had the window open and he smashed me right in the face. "What do you think you are doing? Where do you think you are going? You think you are going to take off with him, and leave me behind?" There was all this screaming, and yelling and crying and blood and fighting.

The best man got out. He kept trying to tell HA, "I could not let her. She would not stop. I could not stop her, and I sure could not let her take off by herself with the kids. I had to come along with her. I had to. I had no choice. I could not let her go by herself." Then he got in the vehicle that HA had caught a ride in and went back to Pelican.

HA and his brother got in the truck and away we went to Saskatoon. We almost ran out of the gas on the Hanson Lake road. We were in between the junction and the first gas station, and we were running out of gas. I said, "God will save us." HA said, "If you think God is going to take care of us, then you had better start praying." We were on the Hanson Lake road in the middle of January and it was thirty-five degrees below zero. It was a Saturday afternoon, and we were almost out of gas.

I can remember saying, "That is okay, God will take care of us." Like my mood swings, I would have all the faith in the world, and everything would be fine. Then I would go down into the depths of despair. A vehicle came around the corner, and we flagged him down. They had five gallons of gas. We got five gallons of their gas and we made it to the next gas station. The carburetor was icing up or something so we were burning more gas than we should have. We stayed overnight in Prince Albert that night, at HA's cousin's home, and went to Saskatoon in the morning. Around Warman, we broke down and some people who were on their way to church gave HA and SNA a ride to go and get gas. The gas was going straight through that truck. We finally got to Saskatoon, and got moved in. Then, HA and his brother had to go back to Sandy Bay because they had to take the truck back. We had used the village garbage truck to move. They unloaded everything, stayed one night, and then left the next day and went back. Then I was on my own with the kids.

I had not been there very long when someone told me that I should go to Calder. "You need to get help." I replied, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I will be fine. I need a job." I would sit on the floor in the living room in my Saskatoon home and praying. I had no groceries; I had no money. I had gotten my welfare cheque, but I had spent it all; I had nothing. I was in Saskatoon with no family, nobody to turn to. I would sit with the family bible. I would ask, "What do I do God? Do I divorce him, or do I stay?" I would open the bible to a random page. Our bible had not been read much at all; it had no creases. Opening it was as random as anyone could get. Every time I opened it, I could find a passage on those two pages that said, "Stay." While I was doing this, "Oh God, rescue me" stuff, I was not doing anything other than job hunting. I had gone to all the nursing homes, the hospitals, and even the clinics, and applied for work. I put an ad in the paper to do private nursing. I continued to drink. The violence started again. HA would come and go. When he was there, I would drink with him. When he was not there, I would go drinking with HA's cousins.

I remember sitting on the floor in that place. I had no furniture; we had a three-bedroom bottom of a Toronto split. We had three mattresses, two singles and a double. I had a washer/spin dryer. The kids had a little table and chair set, and I had an ironing board and a step stool. We had virtually nothing for groceries by then. I think I had a box of chicken noodle soup and a box of macaroni, practically no groceries in the house. I was sitting there and thinking, "God, you had better do something because, I have done everything I know how to do. Now I do not know what to do; I just do not know what to do." Then, I saw the mailman come, and when I went up to the mailbox and opened it, there were all my unemployment cheques, close to fifteen hundred dollars in unemployment insurance payments. I bought a bunch of groceries and took the kids out to supper, and to a show. I was able to get the phone hooked up. The next two weeks were very busy with getting furniture and getting established.

There were a couple of incidents of violence during that time. I remember sitting around in the living room drinking, and saying to HA, "Boy, drinking is a good idea. I do not feel a thing." He just hauled off and hit me.

Whack! Sent me spinning. "It is bad enough that I drink, you should not be drinking." I remember that time, I was bawling because I was way down again. I was not supposed to drink; that was not appropriate for me. HA could drink, his friends could do it; any other women could do it, but not me. Whether that means he had me on some kind of a pedestal or something, I do not know.

It was a Saturday afternoon and we were sitting around in the living room drinking. I got this idea in my head; I was going to knock him out. There was one of those wine bottles with the bubble in the bottom of the glass and it was fairly thick. I figured that if I hit him, it would knock him out. I cracked him right across the back of the head. I did not knock him out. The next thing I knew, I was in the closet, HA was throwing punches at me and my brother-in-law jumped up (he had been passed out on the floor) and started swinging at me. I was in the closet and HA was throwing punches at me. Thank God, there were winter coats hanging in that closet; I ducked. My brother-in-law only swung once or twice, then all of a sudden, he came out of his black-out, and he realized who he was hitting, and then he started pulling HA off me. SNA had to go next door and call the police that time. The cops came and put HA and his brother into the drunk tank. I did not want to lay charges because I had done that in 1972, and I already knew what happened when you laid charges. It made things worse. So, charging him was not an option. It did not help. The cops told me, "We have to let him out in the morning.

I told them, "I will not lay charges, it just makes things worse."

We went to the women's shelter; the kids hated it there. Everybody was under such stress and such tension. The kids wanted to go home and they kept saying, "Dad will not do it again, Mom." I said, "You guys go to school, and I will go home. When you finish school you can come home, and I will be at home." I went home; HA had come home when he got out of jail that morning. I came home and the house was clean. He had done all his laundry. He was going to go out to work; he was leaving. My response was, "Yeah, whatever." He went; he looked for a job but did not find a job. He was not gone that long then came back again.

HA broke off with the woman with whom he was having an affair at the end of February. I told him, "Do not bother coming home. You can live there. I do not want to see you again. I do not want to have anything to do with you. You just go ahead and stay over there." When I said that, he got into a panic, broke it off with her, and came back.

He had not been drinking when she had met him. He had started drinking after that. Suddenly she had him drinking there, and she had his friends drinking there. She had no idea what he was like as a drunk. When she had met him, he had a truck, he had a job, he had a credit card, and he had money. Over the period of Thanksgiving to February, all of that was gone, plus she had to put up with his friends. They drank vanilla, or whatever. They were rubbies.[295] HA drank like that too. She had no idea what he was like as a drunk; he was a main street drunk.[296] She phoned me. She was crying on my shoulder because she could not handle it. Then her child got apprehended. She phoned me, and accused me of calling Social Services and telling them. I had not even thought of that. I do not know who it was that had reported her. Then she could not figure out how to get him out of there.

I do not think I even noticed what was going on with the kids, half the time. I was not really aware of them for that whole five or six months. When Mom and Dad would phone, I had a sense of playing this part: saying that things were okay when they really were not, like a real sense of disconnect. I was getting to the point where I would have severe mood swings. When I went into a blue funk, it was bad.

One day, I was baking bread. I got the bread all ready. As I was doing it, I remember thinking, "I have got to get out of here." I was wearing blue jeans. I had ten dollars in my pocket. I asked my niece to let the bread rise and then stick it in the oven. I had to get out of there. HA tried to stop me. He took my purse away from me, and I just kept right on walking. I guess he figured without my purse and my cigarettes I would not go anywhere. I remember walking on the sidewalk and him driving along beside me in this little station wagon. He was telling me to get in the car but I would not get in.

"Where are you going," he asked me? I would not answer. "Get in the car," I would not answer. He drove up in front of me, stopped, came out, and I just kept walking.

Most the time I would not answer, but when he stopped and he was walking in front of me, I kept repeating, "No." I remember looking at him one time and saying, "Get out of my way, because you are not going to stop me." I was aware that he was there, and I was quite aware that I was walking down the street, that it was a Sunday morning, and that it was a nice day. I was just going, and I was headed towards the river, but I do not know if that meant anything or not, or if it was just because we lived close by.

I remember him saying, "Get in the car. Let me take you somewhere, wherever you want to go I will take you, just get in the car." I got in the car, and he said, "Where do you want to go?"

I said, "I do not know" because I really did not.

"If I can get somebody for you to talk to, will you talk to somebody," he asked?

"Yeah." I do not know how it happened, but I ended up talking to a sister who worked with the Catholic Family Services. This was a Sunday afternoon, and I must have spent most of the day talking to her. I remember an office and the whole afternoon seemed to disappear. I remember her phoning doctors and phoning the hospitals. I guess she was trying to get me admitted to the psych unit, or get me in for observation. She could not get me in anywhere. She talked to HA for a while, and she talked to me for a long time. I really do not remember what we talked about, I probably was telling her what was going on. The only thing she could get was an appointment with the doctor the next day.

I remember her saying to me, "Can you go home tonight and stay home, and go see the doctor tomorrow, at two o'clock?"

"Yeah, I can do that." It was a suicide contract.

The next day, I went to the doctor that she had arranged for me to see. He spent forty-five minutes with me, talking to me, finding out what my history was, what had been going on. At the end of the forty-five minutes, he told me that he was going to put me on lithium. I had to go back a week later and he was going to take blood to see what my level was. Then he would increase it or decrease it, whatever was necessary. After I was on the lithium about ten or eleven days, it started to kick in, and I could feel myself stabilizing. I started to feel a little more normal, and I started to realize that I had to do something. I was still drinking, but not as much.

I went out drinking with my cousin on March 31, 1979. We went to the bar, and I took off my wedding rings. I took them off, and my plan was to get drunk, pick up some guy, and get laid. I was going to show HA what it felt like to be on the other side of the coin. That was all I could think of, getting even. HA's cousin would not leave me alone that whole night. We were drinking in the Continental Hotel bar. We were playing pool and she was watching me like a hawk. I remember going back to her place when the bar closed, and her taking me home. Usually we would go to her place and then I would walk home, but she said, "No, I will take you home tonight. You had better go straight home, because you are pretty drunk." We went to my place, dropped me off and then she went home. I do not know how the kids got home. She must have sent the kids home, or we picked the kids up.

I remember lying down, and I remember going to sleep. When I woke up in the morning, it was very clear that I had to stop it. When I had sobered up at sixteen, because I had gained some self respect in the three months I was in the psychiatric hospital in Brandon, one of the things I promised myself was I was never going to go back down that far. I had lost my self-respect because of the things that I had done before [illegible] went into Brandon. I remember coming out of Brandon, and if I got anything out of that three months in Brandon, it was, "I cannot do that anymore. I have some self-respect. I like myself, I respect myself enough, and I cannot do that." I woke up that morning, and I thought, "I am doing to me what I swore I would never do." That was a line I promised myself I would never cross again. And it did not matter, at that point, what HA did, where he went, who he was with, or what was going on, I knew that I was crazy and I had to do something about me. That was when I had my last drink; I never drank after that.

That was on the Sunday. On the Monday, I phoned Calder. They had the two- week spouse program at that time. I remember asking, telling them that I wanted to go into the spouse program. It was easy, I did an intake over the phone and they gave me a date. They told me to come in right after Easter. I was booked to go in. Somehow I knew that I wanted to be an inpatient and that I needed to be away from everything and from everybody. I could not do this as an outpatient. On the Tuesday, HA wanted to go to the job employment office. He figured if he could just get a job, then life would be better. The job employment office had a job bank, a board full of cards, each with a different job on it. I found this card for a job as a CNA[297] at Larson House[298]. I was not even clear on what a Detox Centre was, but I applied. That night, I went to an Al-Anon meeting at Calder. I consider that one my first real meeting even though I had previously been to two in Flin Flon. It amazed me as I listened to everybody talk; it just blew my mind. Everybody said what I was thinking. The next day, I got a call from the director of Larson House, wanting to interview me for the job at there. He offered me the job. He said, "Come in, do six shifts as orientation. Go to Calder, and then you can start full time after you get out of Calder."

I did the two weeks spouse program at Calder. It was just light bulbs going on all over the place. Just amazing. So many things started to make sense. My big question was, "Why is this happening? Why? Why? Why?

Why? Why? Why?" I found out that it was because of alcoholism; that was the only answer. I realised that was the only answer I was ever going to get, so I had better learn about alcoholism. I learned. I had not been there that long, when HA was calling and putting pressure on me. I do not know what he was upset about. I remember saying to him, "I need this time for me, and I am going to take it. If this is how you are going to talk to me and this is how you are going to support me, then do not bother me. I will not come home this weekend. If I have to stay here to take care of myself, I will." Then I hung up on him. That was something I had never been able to do.

I had to go to work the day after I came out of Calder. When I got home, HA's suitcase was sitting at the door. I said, "Where you going?"

"I am going into Larson House." I went to work in Larson House. They had twenty-eight drunks in there and one of them was HA with whom I had a very dysfunctional relationship! I had only had six days orientation in this job. Then I had gone for two weeks into Calder on the spouse program. It is a wonder I knew my own name. I knew nothing about alcoholism, about detoxing. I was trying to remember what I had learned, in terms of my job, what I had learned at Calder, and to treat him the same way I treated everybody else. He was pulling all the tricks in the book, and he was very affectionate. He kept trying to get me in the corner.

I kept telling him, "I cannot treat you any different from anybody else in here."

HA went in on the Saturday, and he checked himself out on the Tuesday. It was my fault, he said, because I was not treating him right. I talked to the staff supervisor because the staff knew that he was HA. He helped me understand that HA had made a decision that had nothing to do with me. I was beginning to get a sense that it was not me. I was getting some understanding about letting go and about not being responsible for other people's behaviours and other people's feelings. I began feeling much better about it. I got home, and HA had cooked dinner. There was roast beef and mashed potatoes and gravy and veggies and salad, and he was lying on the bed reading the paper. I remember looking at the dinner, and knowing that there was an underlying game here. I remember thinking, "It is your life, your choice." I remember being able to go and tell him, "I have to do what is right for me, and you will do whatever you are going to do for yourself. I am not mad, I am not upset." He just tried to say it was my fault. I said, "No. You did not leave because of anything I did, you left because that is what you chose to do, and that is okay." I continued to work.

I was going to meetings regularly, and the kids were so much happier. I remember watching DR go to school, and the pants she had on were high above her anklebone, and realizing that I was really seeing her for the first time in six or seven months. I remember feeling guilty, just horrified that they had had to survive. I took them to see Catholic Family Services because I was concerned about the impact that that period had had on them. DR went in and told the sister about her life. "My dad drives a garbage truck, and we have a dog named Ringo." She was just going on and on about what our life was like before HA had started drinking, and before everything had gone so crazy.

They suggested that I get the kids into the youth program at Calder. SNA did it that summer. I remember talking to SNA about what I had learned in Al-Anon. I remember him coming home from school and being really upset about something, and me talking about letting go. He got angry with me.

I remember saying to him, "When you are ready to talk we will talk, and if you are not ready to talk that is okay."

He stomped up into his room, mad about something. Then about half and hour later, he came stomping out into the living room, plunked himself down on the couch, and said, "Okay, talk." I do not remember what it was from Al-Anon that I was teaching him, but I remember that it was very appropriate. Then we were able to talk and I was able to explain to him what I had been wanting to tell him, and he was able to hear me.

The kids were supportive of me going to meetings. "Is it meeting day, Mom? Who is going to baby sit, Mom?" They worried about it. HA was not that supportive. I can remember running up the steps to escape a fist. I was going to a meeting and he was staying home to take care of the kids. He was going to hit me, and I just kind of scooted up the steps and went anyway.

The whole thing around detachment and letting go was another step. Every time I achieved any piece of what was suggested through Al-Anon, it was very affirming because I would think, "These are tools that I can use." I also began using other Al-Anon tools such as saying what I meant, owning my feelings, and not using blaming or shaming language.

One of the other things I remember from that time period was going to bed one night and just bawling my eyes out. I remember saying, "God, why does love have to hurt so much?" That night I dreamed of being held in very loving arms, and I knew then that love does not hurt. I woke up in the morning transformed by the experience; I saw things happen in a way that were not my doing. A spiritual foundation was being laid. Once I had a foundation to rest on, then I was able to start rebuilding. Things started getting better.

HA bounced in and out of sobriety. In 1979, he went up to Sandy Bay into the treatment centre and he could not get through to me. He had been panicky about trying to get a hold of me. He could not get through to me because the kids and I had gone somewhere. By now, we had a life. We were going places and doing things. I would tell him, "You go do whatever you have to do, and we are going to do what we have to do." He had gone in and he had tried to phone me to tell me where he was. I was not around. It took him about two days to get a hold of me. One of the women who worked at the centre told me how hard it was to get him to stay there. He was ready to run because he could not get a hold of me and he was in such a panic. He needed to talk to me. She convinced him to stay. When he finally got a hold of me and he talked, and then he was fine. It settled him down.

Things got much better. Then the kids wanted to go home to Sandy Bay. I remember struggling with that, and then, I realised that I wanted to. We did; we moved back. HA, the kids, the dog, and I lived in the Child Care Centre, and we took care of whatever kids were in there. We were house parents during the week. We went home on the weekends. Meanwhile HA stayed sober for about two months, and started drinking again at Christmas: his last drunk. He drank from Christmas until the end of March, 1980, and I stayed out of his way.

His last incident of violence against me while drinking and what preceded him quitting was that I laid charges against him. I was working at the cafe, and he came in. He had been drinking for quite a while; I had been in Al-

Anon for almost a year. He came in and asked me for something. I had said, "No." He picked up a sugar dispenser and threw it at me. It scraped my neck as it whizzed by, so I had a scratch. I took the kids, hitchhiked to Pelican Narrows because Sandy Bay did not have police, went into the police station, and I told them I wanted to lay an assault charge. I wanted them to take a photograph of the mark. They did. I made a statement, told them what had happened and that I wanted him charged, and that I was going to Flin Flon for a couple days until he sobered up. I went to Flin Flon, stayed there for a couple of days, and then went home. When I went back to Sandy Bay, I went to the house. He was sitting there hung-over, and he looked pretty pathetic. I said, "I just came to tell you that I did report you to the police and I did lay an assault charge. Because I will not be hit, I am not going to live with that anymore. You need to know that the police will be coming to see you." Then I left. I did not go to court. It did not matter to me what happened there. He went to court in February, pleaded guilty, told them that he had a drinking problem, and that he was going to go for treatment. He got a fine and a year's probation.

While waiting for treatment, the village hired him to shoot dogs for one day. He had a twenty-six ounce bottle of whiskey, and he was cruising around in the back of the truck, shooting dogs, and he was mad at me because I had reported him and laid charges. I had to go around and pay bills, walking to three or four different places. As I was walking, I was thinking, "God, You had better take care of me because I cannot do anything about him, and I also cannot be terrorised. I have to do what I have to do." So I was walking around, paying bills, and he was drunk and cruising the community with a gun. When I got home that day he was sitting at the kitchen table. He had on a white fisherman knit sweater, there was blood all down the front of it. The bottle was sitting there and the gun was propped up against the wall. I walked in the house. I was all by myself, the kids were still in school, and I stood there but I do not remember being particularly afraid. He had pointed a gun at me once, years before that so I knew that he was capable of it. I stood there, looked, and I realized that he was passed out, that this was not a set up. I did not know what the blood was from, maybe from one of the dogs he had shot or maybe he had gotten into a fight. I took the gun, went next door, and told my neighbour, "I am going to put this gun in the basement in your husband's work shop. Get him to check it when he gets home because I do not even know if it is loaded."

HA came to later, hid the bottle, and locked the door. Then my neighbour phoned me, and said that the gun had been loaded but jammed. The blood, I heard later, was there because he had gotten into a fight with somebody, they had punched him in the nose and, his nose had bled over his shirt. To this day, I do not know if the gun had jammed before he came home and propped it up there, or if he had tried to shoot himself and it jammed. I have no clue.

The second incident of note was when I watched him from the inpatient treatment centre as he crossed the school ground. His head was down, his jacket was open, his arms were hanging at his side, and his hair was hanging down. The path was not wide enough for him. I remember standing there and saying out loud, "God, he cannot stay like this much longer. He cannot live like this. Either take him or sober him up, but put him out of his misery, one way or the other, whatever you have to do, do it because he cannot live this way much longer." I remember feeling peace after that prayer even though it would not have taken much for him to die. Physically, I could see the late stages of alcoholism: the blotching, the sagging skin, the dull lifeless hair, no muscle tone, and distended abdomen. Shortly after that, he talked to the alcohol and drug counsellor who phoned, and drove him to Rosaire House in The Pas. HA had a thermos of coffee and it was mixed. He got drunk as could be on his way down, and they took him, and kept him. He had twenty dollars hidden in his boot that he did not remember that he had. He found it when he was about six or seven days sober. He said that if he had found that on the first two days, he would have been gone. He sobered up in March of 1980.

When there was no alcohol involved, the violence came out of frustration. We would be having a disagreement, an argument. It always came down to a power struggle over something. He never attacked me when he was sober, there was clearly the arguing, the disagreement, the tension, and he would strike me out of frustration, but he was always conscious of it, he was always aware of it. It would be that he would either shove me or he would slap me. I do not remember a fist. It was to make a point because he would be so frustrated with whatever was going on. It was the only way he had of expressing himself at that point. There was not the same level of fear. I would engage in an argument with him. I would fight over an issue. I would disagree.

The first time that he hit me after he was put on probation was out of frustration. I had been invited to go to Cumberland House. Several of us were flying down. He did not think I should. He was angry with me, and I said, "Well, I am going, there is nothing wrong with what I am doing. You are home to take care of the kids. I am not abandoning our children; they have a parent who is available to take care of them for the day. It is a business trip." He slapped me, and I told him that I was going to report it. I said, "This house is not big enough for you and me and your anger. If you are not leaving, and I am not leaving, then I guess it is your anger that is going to have to go. I am going to report this to your probation officer because it is not going to happen anymore." I had no problem stating that. I had no problem going and making the phone call. I still went ahead and did what I was going to do. I always had the sense that part of his frustration was because he could not control me with the anger anymore. I remember telling him, "You are not going to control me through fear."

He said, "I never wanted to." I think, part of it was because I had changed; I had taken a stand and I was reinforcing it. I was backing it up with action as much as I could.

The periods between the violence got longer and longer and longer. From 1983 to late 1988, I do not think there was one incident. He went to Calder in 1983. I had taken the kids on a holiday. He wanted to run away from home and he was trying to get me into a fight, so that I would throw him out. I did not. My plan was, there was a family reunion in Edmonton and I was taking the kids to that. I took the kids and we went to Edmonton, had a wonderful time. We came back and he had been sleeping. He grabbed me and he held onto me for the longest time. When he let go, he said, "I phoned Calder and I am going in. I cannot live like this." I knew that he had not been drinking, because there was no evidence of drinking; there was nothing missing. He told me that he had phoned Calder, and he had arranged to go in because he was having difficulty with his life. He was going in for treatment.

He was in there for three weeks. When he came back, he told me about he had been trying to get me in a fight so that I would throw him out. If he could get me into a fight then I would get mad. I would throw him out, and then he could justify going to Vancouver and abandoning his family. Otherwise, he could not justify it. I had not taken the bait. I had no idea what he was up to doing. He could not get me into it. When he came out of Calder he said, "Well, I have got to start going to AA meetings." It lasted maybe a month. He quit going to meetings when he got into politics. He started being on village council, and getting involved with his job, with the Group Home. I do not remember any outbursts of frustration. There were issues that we argued about but I do not remember anything in particular.

Any violence that occurred from then, until the last episode, which was in 1991, was not that often. It was never as severe as it had been in the past. Once he recognized that he had been abused, that was when I noticed a fundamental change in him. I was never as afraid of him. There was not that terrorism aspect to it. It was almost like it was natural, as when my dad and mom would fight and argue. I could see my dad's frustration. My dad would show his frustration. He never hit, but he would yell and he would hit the table, or he would throw something across the room. I never saw him hit my mom, and I do not remember her saying that he did. They were trying to sort out a problem. They were disagreeing about something, so his frustration and hitting the table or throwing something made sense somehow.

Before his dad died, I had wanted to leave, I had started that in about 1983, and I wanted to go. "Well, we cannot leave my mom and dad." I wanted to get the kids out of there, because I did not like the education that they were getting.

I said, "I would like them to get a decent education. They are not going to get it here."

He said, "I cannot leave my mom and dad," and then, "I cannot leave; my dad is too sick and if we leave, my mom is going to leave him." There was always a reason why we could not go. In 1985, he lived in Saskatoon with SNA for one semester. I was ready for a separation because I was so sick of some of the stuff that was going on. Instead, he moved out and took SNA with him so that SNA would have somebody to live with when he went to Saskatoon. We kind of sidestepped the whole issue there. I do not remember any physical violence; I do not remember any terrorism or any threats of violence at that time. After his dad passed away in 1987, his dad's death gave me permission to leave. I left in 1988 to go back to school. He did not want to come, and so I moved to Prince Albert and then he started to commute.

I lived in Prince Albert from 1988 to 1991, and there was one episode there, where we got into an argument. I cringed from him and that really got him mad because he said, "I am not going to hit you, I have not hit you for a long time, and I am not going to hit you now." It was an automatic reaction. I could feel the tension building, and when he came towards me, I automatically backed off. There was one episode in La Ronge. We were arguing, he came towards me and I pulled back. He got mad, because I was cringing from him, and he was not going to hit me. He said, "I have not hit you. Look, it has been a long, long time. I do not do that anymore. Why are you cringing?" There was still that little bit of fear. I had done it a couple of times, where he would be really mad at me, and he got right in my face, and I had just backed off. Then he said, "Why are you doing that, I am not going to hit you. I have not hit you for a long time, and I am not going to hit you." The instinct was automatic. After 1993, it was gone.

HA got sober, and he worked hard at it. I am not taking away any of the credit for him sobering up but I think one of the things that made it possible was that I had changed. We were no longer locked in that power struggle. When I first came out of Calder, the game was, "I do not know what to do; I do not know how to solve this problem." I would tell him what to do to solve it. I would give him all these ideas. Then he would either try one or two, and they would not work so it was my fault, or he would not do any of them, so then I would be mad. I learned that I had to quit giving him answers. Shortly after that, he had started with, "I do not know what to do."

I remember looking at him, and saying, "Well, it is your life and you will figure it out." Then I never said anything. I just said that, and I shut my mouth. I remember the sense of power that I got from shutting my mouth, not saying anything, and just letting it go. Throughout that whole day, it was so neat, because he kept looking at me like he could not figure out what was going on; this was not typical behaviour.

I remember he came over to me at one point, he looked at me very seriously, and he said, "You know, I really do love you."

I said, "Yeah, I know you do."

He had his heart surgery in 1993, and he received an awareness the first time he got out of bed, went over to the window, looked outside. He got an appreciation for life and he realized how much of his life he had wasted. Then, he remembered being sexually abused by a priest as a child. From the way he talked about the abuse, he never remembered it until after his surgery. He had been home about a week when he told me about it. That is when the memories surfaced, and he told me the story. After he remembered the abuse and told me the story, I saw a fundamental change in him. As he regained his strength after the surgery and started to resume his normal activities, there was something different about him. I cannot put my finger on it, but he was a changed person.

He spent time writing it out, in the form of a letter to the Bishop, telling the Bishop what had happened and wanting to find out where his priest was because he wanted to confront him. He talked to his peers, trying to get them to talk about it, and most of them would not. He never did. I suggested that he see somebody; I think he did see a counsellor once or twice, but that was it.

I understood the rage blackouts when he told me about his being sexually abused as a child. I had twice seen him black out and beat someone up. Both times the guy that he beat up had invaded his personal space. Both times, the guy come into our home and had refused to leave when HA asked him too. Both times, there was a clear violation of his personhood. Both times the guy had barged into our home without being invited, and then had refused to leave. Both times he beat them up. Both times he said that did not remember the assault. Both times, it was when he saw the blood, and saw the guy on the floor that he realised that he must have been on the tear.

What I say to women now is in order to break the cycle you need to recognize the part you play. The cycle of violence has two handles and two hands, and you need to take your hand off. You need to stop spinning it yourself; you need to stop contributing to it. That was a key factor for me being able to make changes in my behaviour, then go ahead and pursue laying charges against HA when he assaulted me. It was not about the severity of the assault; it was about breaking the cycle. My part was that I was power struggling all the time. I was constantly trying to figure out what I could do to make him change. If he was getting angry, I knew what buttons to push to make him blow up. So that I could be in charge, playing the games, not dealing with issues head on, doing the passive-aggressive stuff, using the silent treatment. All of those old behaviours all contributed to it. Those were some of the things I realized that I needed to change. I had to start looking at my behaviour in any given situation, whatever it was, and ask, "Am I trying to manipulate this person? Am I trying to create a reaction?" I had to recognise that there is no healthy manipulation unless you are a chiropractor manipulating a joint. Part of it, too was realising that I was attracted to an alcoholic, and that I got into a relationship with an alcoholic for a reason. There were things in my upbringing that made me a perfect fit. If I did not want to be a perfect fit for an alcoholic then I had to look at my behaviours. I had to look at what some of my beliefs were, what some of my values were, what some of my behaviours were. Then, I had to take it from there.

One thing my mom used to say to me about a man who says he loves you, was if he really cares about you, then give him six months to prove it. If somebody was coming to me, starting a relationship and these things were showing up, I think that is something that I would suggest. If he is making promises to change, give him six months to do what he has to do. If there are definite issues such as violence or alcoholism, if it is showing up early in the relationship and you are getting promises for changed behaviours, give it six months. I think that would be one thing that I would suggest.

Over the years, there has been an ongoing pattern of not dealing with issues in our relationship. The issues have changed, but some of our basic approaches really have not changed. We express them a little differently. In the past, if HA did not want to continue a discussion, he would leave. His way of controlling the situation was to get up and go out. Now, he will just leave the room mentally. He does not participate in any of the arguments. He shuts down if he cannot physically remove himself. I went from not saying anything, to saying it but doing it using all the tools that I had been given, to saying it in a good way, to just saying it as I see it. I am not careful with my words anymore; I do not care anymore.

He never left Sandy Bay. Even when we went back in 1977, to me we had left for five years and then gone back. For him, he never really left because he would go back every year. He gets robbed there, right, left and centre. He does not do anything about it. It is like a spouse being beaten, like a woman when you have got domestic abuse going on, and the spouse will go back an average of thirty-seven times before they say, "I have got to stop this."

I see him in that same cycle. It is not that people are physically violent to him but they steal him blind. He just goes back.

I hope this interview and research process will help him get some kind of resolution with himself, some awareness of who he is, where he is, and what he wants.

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[292] AA is the acronym used to represent Alcoholics Anonymous, a fellowship of men and women who share experience, strength, and hope with each other to solve their common problem and to help other alcoholics to recover from alcoholism. (AA Grapevine, 2005, October, p. 1)

[293] Round-Up is referring to a special event hosted by Alcoholics Anonymous which consists of several days of meetings, along with shared meals, and fellowship. Anyone can attend a Round-Up.

[294] SAP is an acronym which stands for Saskatchewan Assistance Program.

[295] 'Rubbies' is a term commonly used in the North to refer to people who drink rubbing-alcohol.

[296] 'Main street drunk' is a term commonly heard in Winnipeg to refer to a person, usually Aboriginal, who is inebriated, poor, dirty, violent, and seen in the main street area.

[297] CNA or Certified Nursing Assistants provide nursing care for patients under the direction of registered nurses, physicians and other health team members. They are employed in hospitals, nursing homes, extended-care facilities, rehabilitation centres, doctors' offices, clinics, companies and private homes (Saskatchewan Job Futures, 2006).

[298] Larson House works to stop, settle, or modify the behaviour of who are severely addicted to alcohol or other substances. It is an eighteen-bed residential treatment for men and women age eighteen and over. Self-referrals as well as referrals from doctors, families, or Employee Assistance Programs are common. Clients may discharge themselves at any time. The first step in the rehabilitative process is detoxification, commonly known as 'Detox." After detox, the client is referred to an appropriate agency that provides supervised conditions to aid them on their way to recovery and sobriety (Saskatchewan Health Services, 2006).

Appendix C: SNA's (Son's) Story

When I think about violence when I was a kid, I always see a certain house, which was on the corner of Selkirk and College Street in Winnipeg[299]. We lived there from when I was five until I was seven. Then we moved to Sandy Bay. The violent incidents that are clear and that I have a good memory of are usually there. We actually lived in the house next door before that, but my memory is not as clear for that period. .

I remember that my dad, HA, would go away in the morning. I must have been about five, when I remember one incident really clearly. It was morning and my dad was going away. I followed him to the door. I remember asking him where he was going, but he would not say; he just sort of brushed me off. I followed him to the door, the door closed, and he was gone. That was early in the day. That night he came home and he was drunk. I just remember it was really dark in the house, my mom and dad were in the bedroom and I was not, but I could hear them in there. It sounded like they were laughing and having a good time. It was loud; both of them were talking and laughing. Then it turned. It turned really quickly and then they were fighting. I think I saw a little of it, but somehow I just saw figures. I just remember the impression that just like that, [snaps fingers] it went in a different direction. It was really scary all of a sudden. Up to that point it seemed like it was good, and then all of a sudden it was terrible. That is a really clear memory that I have of the violence in my home.

Another incident that I remember was with my dad when I must have been between five and seven. I was at home. He came home and it was late at night. I remember that he told me to stay. He grabbed me and he held me really tight, tighter than I felt comfortable being held. It was not like a nice father-son moment. He was pretty rough. I remember him saying, "I am going to show you how to shoot a shotgun, how it feels when you shoot a shotgun." Then he took me, held me, and I could not get away. I remember the feeling of being confined. I could not get away, and I was scared because he was being loud and rough. Then he took his fist and he hit my chest really hard, way harder than he should. I remember that as an impression because it scared me. It was a defining moment for me in terms of my feelings toward intimacy. The violence affected me very profoundly in how I was able to have relationships, or be intimate with somebody.

I do not remember much violence when my dad was sober, when my mom was sober, or when they were both sober. It seems to me that when alcohol was involved, it would make a bad situation worse. When one or the other drank, or both of them drank, that was when it all came out. I do not remember my dad being violent to my mom when he was sober. I saw a few instances of him being aggressive or violent with other people when he was sober, but never with my mom. I do not remember my mom being drunk at all, but I know in Sandy Bay there were periods when she drank a lot. I was never really around when she did that; she must have whisked me away to somebody's house. One violent incident that occurred when they were both drinking together happened when I was seven or eight years old. I went to stay at a friend's house in Sandy Bay. That night my mom and dad had a big fight. She tried to run him over with the truck, and my dad jumped up on the hood and he kicked in the windshield. I remember being told what had happened.

We lived in Saskatoon[300] for six months. My mom and dad fought a lot there. I remember having to go two doors down to my friend's house to call the police to come and take my dad away because they were fighting. He was violent and I think my mom tried to break a bottle over his head to stop him from attacking her. I think she explained that if she knocked him out, then he would not be able to get aggressive with her. It did not work, and it just made a bad situation worse. I had to go to call the police and have them take my dad away. When the police came, my mom was crying. My dad, when they took him away, was crying and saying, "What are you doing? How can you do this to me?" That was the last year my dad drank. A lot of things were probably coming to a head; it seemed to be getting worse.

After we moved to Sandy Bay in that year, I do not remember a lot of violence. I just remember my dad walking around town selling things to buy booze. He was carrying foam mattresses, car batteries, and stuff like that from the warehouse that he could sell so he could drink, a common practice in Sandy Bay. When a guy wants to get drunk, he will sell little pieces of stuff to keep going. I did not think that he would get sober. Then he did.

My dad sobered up that year, and I remember my ten-year-old mind thinking, 'Well, that will be the end of all this stuff," because by that time I had begun to associate the alcohol use with violence. It seemed to be tied together. Even at my age it was obvious. I figured that because the alcohol use was over, the violence was finished. I also was aware of how a person can change when they drink. I had seen that in my dad. The dad that I knew when he was sober and the one that I knew when he was drunk were very different, so I knew that could happen.

The violence was not completely over; there were things that happened in the years that followed where there was violent behaviour. He did not hit her, but he forcibly removed her from somewhere, which is a couple degrees less. I remember my dad physically taking my mom out of the Child Care Centre when I was twelve or thirteen. He hauled her out, threw her in the truck, and took off. That was the last time I remember anything that was aggressive to the point of physical contact.

After that, I have an impression of my dad getting older and changing his behaviour, and of my mom calming down. Their relationship did not necessarily get better in terms of peace and serenity, but it did get better in terms of violence. There was no more throwing stuff around, no more hollering in the house.

When I was thirteen, in either the late summer or the fall of 1983, I walked into my mom and dad's bedroom, and my dad was the only one at home. Everybody else was gone for some reason. My mom was probably working. My dad's suitcase was on the bed and it was packed. I was blown away. He walked into the room and I remember he said, "There you have it." That meant, "I am leaving." I freaked out and cried. I remember he changed his mind and he decided that he was not going to go. I was totally aware that it was because of my reaction that he decided to stay.

It was still far from a peaceful home; there was still all this stuff that happened. I remember going to Jan Lake; it was really tense then. I must have been fourteen or fifteen because my mom and dad ran a group home around that time. It was all the kids, all the group home people, the families, the four of us, and my foster brothers and sister. When you look at the pictures now, you can tell that my parents were miserable. I remember that it was some kind of special occasion, because there were gifts and stuff exchanged. I cannot remember if it was my dad's birthday or my mom's or Father's Day or whatever, but it was not a grand old time. They were probably doing it for us more than anything, or maybe it was just business as usual.

There have been times when my parents' relationship has been better, and times that it has been worse. They are still together, but it seems that there have been a few times when things have been really good, and times when everything was just terrible. I have lived away for a while and before that I lived my own life since I was seventeen. I have not had much of a chance to observe their relationship closely. I am not sure how it all works, but I have always marvelled at the fact that it is never done in terms of, "Well, that part is over now, and now is when we kick back and enjoy the rest of this time." Their relationship seems to wax and wane. It comes and goes, and I am never sure why.

Place is a big thing in the relationship of my parents. For them to grow and be individual as well as together, they need to be within the community, and it seems like that is often somewhere physically different from each other. My dad is from Sandy Bay. He has his roots there. He feels a sense of connection there that is partly born of the land and partly of the circumstances of the people in Sandy Bay. My dad's heart is about helping the people of Sandy Bay; that is his motivation. But it does not help him. Instead, it makes things a lot worse for him. Because as strong a person as he is and as much will as he has, it is not enough to survive the circumstances of his environment. His political leanings or his leadership tendencies play a big part in his desire to help people. His desire to help finds its manifestation in political activism: doing things for other people as mayor, councillor, or advisor. He has done all those things now. He is now an elder; that is a big thing. His need to be present in Sandy Bay is probably hard for my mom, because she is not from there. She does not have that need to be present. Her life is different; it is about something else. Their relationship is about reconciling those two things. It has to be difficult and maybe even impossible. They are still working at it.

Sandy Bay plays a big part in their relationship because it is not a healthy community. It has had its moments where it has been better, and it has had its moments when it has been worse. When I grew up there, the first time I drank I was thirteen. It was not really a good age to starting drinking. I got high that same year in Sandy Bay. Part of the rationale for my leaving Sandy Bay was that there was not any opportunity there. But, I learned to play guitar when I lived in Sandy Bay and it was there that I learned to take a photograph. It was there that I read tons about stuff. I learned a lot there.

When my dad is in a bit of a state of disrepair with regard to his ability to function and to do well, it is a reflection of where the whole community is at. He is very much a microcosm on that. If the community is in one of its healthy, robust periods, as healthy as Sandy Bay ever is, my dad is reflective of that. He is in better health. But, it is a rough place in terms of how people function and what affects them: alcohol and drug use, all the things that come out of that which are worse. Sandy Bay has been an influence on my parents' relationship and their ability to function because my dad is more invested or less invested in the community. That is something that has been true over the last twenty years. He is really involved or he is not being as involved and that determines how well he is, in part. If he is fully involved in the community, then he is going to be more affected by the values of the community because he is a part of it. If he is less involved, then it will have less of an impact on him. So I think Sandy Bay is a big factor in my parents' relationship. It affects how my parents get along and what happens with them.

If they are fairly close together in terms of their development, their growth, their functionality, their ability to look after each other and themselves and be compassionate and caring, then their relationship is okay. The further apart they get in any of these areas, the harder it is for them to be okay together. A part of being close together or far apart has to do with what they are doing. It is a strain on my mom when my dad is really into the political thing because his head is so much into the issues and concerns of that particular job that he has very little time for her or for their relationship. That is when their separations happen, when it is probably harder for her to be truly present with his situation. So, a big part of their relationship is their ability to both be present and available to each other. At the times when they are not, those are the times when there is difficulty. When my dad is less functional and my mom is more functional, it is not good because they are not as able to relate as easily, which leads to communication problems, which leads to stand-offs, which leads to separation. That is true on the part of my mom, too. When she is really into training, then it is harder for her to be present with his situation, with the same result.

The quality of their relationship has everything to do with how their individual states of being rub up against each other. When they are both doing good in terms of their well-being, then that is when they can relate to each other the most. When things are in balance, my parents are good together. They connect with each other, they do things for each other, and it is all good. They go places together; they do things together. However, I recently saw a physical hand gesture that was reflective of the current state of their relationship. The gesture symbolised, "I am over here and you are over there." Later, they both said those words. Yet, from what I have seen, they want to be together.

I always feel like the family camp[301] near Sandy Bay is just our location, and I always feel at peace when I am there, really centred. That place, more than anywhere else, is my point of orientation as well as is the north in general. As an adult, I have strongly identified myself as a northern person. It has had a lot to do with the work I have been doing and my involvement in the community, but I have always felt like that is a place where I belong and where I count. It comes from being a northern person, and from being from that community. It is central to me even though I live elsewhere.

My grandfather, my mom's dad, was wary at first of my parent's relationship and then came to be accepting of it. I know that my grandmother, my mom's mom, did not like my dad for quite a while. With my grandmother, there may have been racial overtones to the whole thing. She was British, and that was the general attitude toward Aboriginal people in the 1940's and 1950's. From what I can tell, my dad's parents were accepting of my mom. My grandmother, my dad's mother, called my mom, *my girl*, and stuff like that. Generally, both sets of parents were pretty supportive after a while. I think the least supportive individual to my mom and dad's relationship would have been my grandmother, but she warmed over time. It is my understanding that once we came along, then that changed everything, because then there were a grandchildren involved. A lot of the other things went away.

I can think of a number of turning points in my parents' relationship. When I was young, I remember not having any clear sense of direction of where we were going.[302] We just went from place to place a lot. Now that I am older and I think of it with an adult's perspective and experience, I think our moving around had a lot to do with the chaos that was going in our lives. My mom probably did not know where she was going half the time. We moved to Saskatoon in the middle of the year when I was about nine years old. Then, when I was fourteen, I went to Hole River, Manitoba[303] for one-half of a year, then to Saskatoon with my dad to finish the school year. In some ways maybe I do not know how much of that was them wanting me to get a good education or them wanting to get me out of the Sandy Bay environment.

Moving to Sandy Bay had to be a turning point for them. My mom and my dad used to go to Sandy Bay all the time. At one point, my dad came back to Winnipeg and said that he wanted to move to Sandy Bay because he had worked there. It was really something that he felt strongly about. My mom's moving there involved a considerable amount of sacrifice from her. She moved to Sandy Bay and probably gave up a lot of things.

Us kids growing up and moving away must have been a big one because once that happened their big job was more or less complete. Their life probably had to be redefined at that point. When my grandfather passed away, my dad said to my mom, "You can go now." I do not think I fully understand that. There was something about how she had to make a big sacrifice to move to Sandy Bay and to stay there. Once my grandfather passed on, then a part what my dad needed my mom there for did not exist anymore so he said she could go. That was a big turning point for them because she moved to Prince Albert shortly thereafter and that was the beginning of the period of their constant functional separation, where he would live in one place and she would live in another. As far as I know, that was the story of how she moved away. Then she was living somewhere, and he was living somewhere else. There was the going back and forth, right from the start. I cannot remember how much my mom went back to Sandy Bay after she left, but I know that my dad would come to Prince Albert. It was his house and her house, but more her place. Then that pattern carried over to La Ronge, and that is the arrangement that exists to this day. So that was a big turning point in the relationship. Now I ask myself, "Where are they both going to be? Are they going to be together?"

My mom and dad worked through the violent things in their relationship and stayed together. My dad said, "We never fight. We do not talk but we never fight." It is the lesser of two evils, not to relate with a partner rather than to fight. There still needs to be a better way to resolve conflict, but there are no phone calls to the police any more. They made it through the violence. Life is too short to live in violence. It is really hard to see the blessing of life and to celebrate the miracle of life if you are trying to overcome a violent environment, violent circumstances. It is one of the most destructive, soul-sucking things there is; it is awful. They still lose contact with each other. They are still working it out, trying to figure how to do it. It would seem to me that they do not have answer yet, because if they did, they would not be coupling and uncoupling, and coupling and uncoupling like they do.

We have had some pretty strong people in the family going all the way back. They are strong-willed and I think that their will has had a lot to do with healing. My family are the kind of people that say, "We are going to do this." Then, once we decide on something, it is pretty hard to change our minds or redirect us. So if we are going in a direction of chaos and being haywire then watch out because we are not going to be very easily persuaded to change that direction.

Wilfulness is a huge thing, one that you would not have to dig too far to get. My family's character is one of pride, top to bottom. Ask anybody and they will tell you that my family is strong and that they are set in their ways. They are determined and opinionated; the meekest family member will demonstrate those characteristics. My family views it as a strength, a defining characteristic to be proud of.

Beyond the spiritual and political realms, the stubborn nature and wilfulness are really strong traits of our family, something that probably directed us in the right direction throughout. This direction is true for us whether it was my dad at nineteen and twenty learning hard working and living in an unfamiliar environment, or me making those same choices at seventeen or eighteen and my dad not being that worried about it because he knew that I was probably just like him in a lot ways. That direction is also true as it applies to our getting straightened out and trying to sort out our lives at this point in time.

There are a lot of the same character traits on both sides of my family. Until I got older, I never realised that a lot of the drinking problems and the abuse problems came just as much from my mother's side. I found out just a short while before my mother's mother died that basically, she had been a functional junky her whole life. When I was younger, I was ashamed of what my grandmother would think of the fact that I was doing drugs, that I was a recreational drug user. I was always kind of ashamed of being a drug user because I thought, "Here I am, letting her down. This is not something that she would approve of, or that she would do." Then, I found out a year before she died that she had been a junky[304] all her life.

When I think back to Sandy Bay and my upbringing and I compare stories with my sister, I find that her experience is vastly different from mine. I was living in some kind of bubble when I was there. I was in my head a lot. My experience was different from her experience. She has told me stories about Sandy Bay that have to do with these awful sexual incidents involving girls: exploitation, rape, and worse. These things were happening when I was a kid growing up there, and I had no idea. On the other hand, she has a clear idea about what happened and she does not mince words about it. I had no clue these things were happening to my peers. I just did not see it; I was not looking for it. It was never thrust in my face and I never noticed it.

I always felt like an outsider, not necessarily a loner but just walking my own path. A lot of my childhood, I lived in my imagination. These things were going on around me but I was oblivious to them all because I had this more interesting thing going on in the pages of a magazine or in a book or something like that. By the time that I was eleven or twelve, a lot of the immediate violence in our family was gone but it was imbedded enough in my psyche and in my experience to enable me to seek out any diversions I could to take me away from it all.

At the same time, as a kid, I did not have the benefit of any comparative experience, so my experience was the only experience that I knew. I grew up knowing that my mom and my dad drank, that my dad hit my mom, that my mom hit my dad, or that there was this violent dynamic that existed. I figured that was the same way for everybody. Violence was and still is fairly common in Sandy Bay, not just domestic violence, but all kinds of violence. It has to do with the well-being of the community, one's ability to have a healthy relationship, and one's ability to raise children properly. When I was a kid and we moved to Sandy Bay, I got a lot of broken bones because I was coming from an environment that did not have violence to an environment that did. I was the new kid and I was different, so I was picked on a lot.

I have always been far away from Sandy Bay, since I moved away when I was sixteen. In one way or another, I have been very far away from there. I would not say I am glad. I still like the community. My connection with the land will never be as strong as my dad's connection, but I still feel it. I still feel it in terms of orientation when I go there, just in terms of grounding out. I have never really thought of it as being really glad to be far away from there. However, I am glad that I do not live there, just because everything I have done since I have grown up has had to do with my not being there. Had I stayed there, I would not have been able to do nearly anything that I have done that I feel proud of or happy about in my life. So I am glad for that.

The first year I moved away[305] was one of the hardest years of my life because I was a kid, fourteen, and I was far away from home. A big experience for me when I moved away was having to learn to not miss my family as much; it was really hard. None of my immediate family was with me. I was thrust into another home that had a family dynamic that I was not familiar with. There was tension there; I had to go from one frying pan to another frying pan, a totally different one, with the heat and texture of each pan being different. That was hard. I was a sensitive kid when I was fourteen. The cold war was big then, and I used to think, "Oh God, there is going to be a nuclear war, and I will never see my family again. I am so far away. If it ever happens, I will never see them again." I remember lying awake many nights, thinking that if something happened I would never see them again and it was so sad, really sad. I remember visualising a mushroom cloud across the water. It was, "That is the end. I will never see them again." That was a hard year.

I was with my uncle and his family for four months. I did half the school year there, and then I moved to Saskatoon. For the second half, I moved in with my dad in one of my parents' separations. My dad was in Saskatoon, and my mother was in Sandy Bay. That was hard too, because I was growing accustomed to being away from home. I still was not fully used to it, but suddenly I had to be actively parented by someone who had never actively parented me up to that point. It was just him and I, duking it out in a one-bedroom apartment in Saskatoon for four months. All these things I ultimately see as positive things because during that year that I was away from home, I learned to be away from home. What I learned that year equipped me with what I needed to go out into the world. It enabled me to go so many places that I have been in my life that I probably would have had a hard time going to otherwise. Living with my dad was tough because we had to get to know each other in a really primary sort of way. We went through all sorts of stuff but there were benefits. The benefits were that after that year, I could communicate with my dad in a way I had never been able to up to that point. I could say things to him that I would have been too afraid to say to him before, because in the four months we lived together, we probably said everything under the sun to each other just as a means of getting through the day. Our time together alone in Saskatoon opened the lines of communication for him and I and it strengthened our relationship; it brought us closer together. It made us father and son, really. Had we not had that, we would not have had a relationship. I feel grateful every day for my dad.

When I lived in La Ronge, I used to go see my grandmother six to eight times a year. I used to love going to see her. We would visit and talk and she would tell me stuff, and at some point she would end up hitting me up for money. I was always happy to give it to her and she was always happy to get it. She praised me, and I knew that I was her favourite. That is always nice. To this day, my grandmother's house, the camp, and my mom's place in Wadin Bay[306] are the most peaceful places I know. There is just something about them that make me feel safer there than anywhere else.

The violence has had a really big effect on my ability to be intimate with people. I think it affected my ability to express my feelings. I learned from my mom a lot about the stiff upper lip, the whole British thing which she must have learned from her mom. So on her side there is the stiff upper lip, which is very much a part of the British thing. On my dad's side, it is the tough northern man thing, which is, you do not show your emotions. I learned a lot about that. I am not sure whether it is related to violence, but it is very much a part of the environment of keeping your emotions in check. "Do not let them get too far away. Do not show them too much." Part of the game when you are in a dysfunctional situation that has overtones of abuse to it, is that you put a good face on everything. When you have something like violence in your home, it becomes this little secret that you do not want to share with anybody. Keeping your emotions in check and holding your cards close to your chest are very much in keeping with that. They work well together. You do not show your emotions, you do not let anything out. You have this little secret about this terrible thing that happens at home, and you do not share that with anybody. So, there is a relationship between something hurtful happening at home and everyone not letting anyone know about what is happening.

The violence has changed me in the way of intimacy, in the way that I express my emotions. I have really had to work hard on being more emotionally available and transparent to those that are close to me. That has been a real effort for me; I have to really remember to practise it. It is better now, but I have to remember to be expressive, and to let people know how I feel because I can keep my emotions in pretty good. Those who know me really well can see through it, but I can get by pretty easy without other people knowing how and what I feel. People that know me well tease me and say that I could be a politician because you never know where I am coming from. This is amusing and cool in the sense that I have some control over my responses.

However, it is also reflective of where I have come from and what shaped me into who I am.

I have had to bear out the consequences of growing up in a violent atmosphere. My character had to bear out emotional detachment and the ability to be not present emotionally in situations. I learned that as a coping mechanism from my parents and from the situation that I grew up in, but I think there were other things too. There was generally an aversion to confrontation that has come as a result of the violence. I still do not dig confrontation, and I have probably developed a passive aggressive element to my character as a result of not wanting to be in a confrontational situation. I have never really had too much confrontation in any of my relationships. Refusing to engage in confrontation also has a lot to do with why I would leave after couple of years. When I was confronted with having to go to the next level or to cross the threshold, I found it easier just to walk away. My walking away probably has had to do with not wanting to confront things. Those have all contributed to the story of my life.

I had a couple of relationships in my twenties that were not very good. One in particular was just terrible; it had everything to do with my wanting to be a caretaker to somebody. It was not cool at all; it was not healthy; it was not good. I stayed longer than I should have, put up with really stupid stuff, and it was all because I saw myself as being the saviour to this person which is related back to my experience as a kid.

I never experienced violence first hand in any of my relationships with any of my partners until I experienced it with the mother of my children. We met in 1993 when we were both in the Role Model Program[307]. Then in 1996 we had the last hurrah in Ottawa for our group and that was the start of our romantic relationship. We resolved that we would go out. That led to me moving to Vancouver in the fall of 1996, and I was there through 1997. We spent all of our free time together during that period. I planned to work with her aunt in British Columbia so that I could be with them. Then circumstances changed. I moved back to Saskatchewan for the summer, and then stayed on in Saskatchewan to work MBC[308]. My partner and her son moved to Saskatchewan in the late summer of 1997. They came to live with me in La Ronge[309].

About a month after she moved to La Ronge, our relationship had one of those turning points when the violent incidents started happening. Initially the violence was not directed toward me, but in my direction. I would not get hit by her, but a projectile would come in my general direction, like a can of soup would hit the wall behind me instead of hitting me square in the forehead. There would be violent outbursts, she would get mad, and it was like she was two different people. It was like a switch would go off somewhere, and she would become somebody else. Maybe I want to preserve my image of her as basically a really good, really caring, really beautiful person, and the person that she was when she was angry had none of those characteristics. She was a totally different person. Initially I did not know what to think. Then the violence began to happen more frequently. In part, I think it had to do with her being so far away from home. It was also the result of all her childhood issues. The result, whatever the cause, was that I was becoming more and more confused about what was going on. I felt that it was taking away from who I was. My initial reaction to the first incident was confusion and despair. I was just thinking, "What is this?" Then as the incidents continued to happen, I became angry. "What is the matter with you? What is the matter with me? Why are you doing this?" In the incidents following, the most violent that I got with her was to push her away just so that she could not hit me or flail at me. That was about as violent as I got, but that was enough for me; I did not want any part of any violence.

There was an incident where she punched me square in the face when I was almost asleep. In another incident that was pretty scary, she drove our car at thirty miles an hour into the front of MBC. She had been aiming at me. I had just walked in the door and five seconds after, the car hit the building. Some pretty scary stuff happened with her. I still cannot really understand why it happened, nor can I understand what was going on.

I had begun to see that she drank more than I thought she did, once I got to know her better. I did not think she drank at all because we were both in the Role Model Program, and to my way of thinking, that meant that we did not use drugs or alcohol. To me abstaining from alcohol and drugs was a big part of the Role Model Program. But it was not about that for everybody, and she was one of the Role Models where the drinking was ongoing.

None of the incidences were about alcohol. They were always just blind rage. I did not understand why they occurred, and even to this day, I really do not understand it. The only things that I can put my finger on are childhood issues about men that go back to abuse in her family, her emotions stirred up, perhaps a sense of rootlessness, being uprooted to La Ronge from British Columbia, and just the lack of support that she may have felt, being away from her whole family.

not because I thought, "I am going to beat this," So living down my own dysfunction and my own pattern of behaviour became more important than making the right choice, which was getting out of there.

I am now in a relationship with a woman with whom I am in love. I am happy for my life now, because there is a great deal of peace and satisfaction in my relationship. But when you are with somebody and have kids with them, it is common that you want to imagine that is going to be your life. You do not want anything to break that up. Because of that, I felt a good deal of guilt about breaking my former relationship, and I still feel bad about it occasionally. Then I look at her life. My former partner has a new partner that is supportive of her, and they get along as far as I can tell. I do not see that the same things are happening in her new relationship, at least to the degree that they were with us. My kids seem happy in their life, and they are cared for. I am happy for them, but I would still like to see them every day.

There is not a day goes by that I do not think about that. I feel less fully realised as a parent and violence is a part of that. I believe that if I would have encountered the violence without having any background in it, I might have reacted differently to it. Instead, I just found myself getting pulled into this awful cycle, and I did not know how to get out of it. I did not know what to do to make it any better. When I tried to talk to my former partner about it, there was no way to discuss it in a rational way. It would always descend into chaos. It was hard, really hard.

We are okay with each other now. We both recognise that we were not in a good place for each other then. We both have the kids' interests at heart and we both love our kids like crazy. I want nothing but the best for them, and she wants nothing but the best for them. She is a good mother. She really does well with them. I am really happy that she is their mom. We get along.

I was twenty-four when I started to go back and start figuring some of this stuff out, and it was only at a moment when I felt non-functional and completely at wits-end about my life that I was able to go and start digging stuff up. I confronted my own temper; I got acquainted with the nature of it and began to be afraid of it. I realised, "I am just like my dad in a lot of ways." I knew that my dad had no recollection of the violence and then I felt the same thing myself. I knew that I came by it honestly because of my father. Then once I felt it I decided, "No, I do not want to do that. I do not want to go through that. Now I know that if you black out because of anger, then that is a recipe for trouble. If you black out because of alcohol, you could end up in a number of situations, but blacking out in anger is worse. There are a few things that could happen and none of them are good. I definitely do not want to live like that. I have gotten older; my experience with violence strengthened in me the desire to have reasonable ways to resolve conflict.

In my relationship, I just wanted to stick it out but I could not. It took my infant son's involvement to make me decide, "I cannot do this." In a cathartic, revolutionary moment, I stepped out and I thought, "If I am not a part of this [violence] equation, then maybe there is a chance that our children will not go through it. I am going to take myself out of this, and hopefully, that will solve it. Now, not a day goes by that I do not wish that it could have worked out differently. But, I cannot help but be grateful for the way things are now. I have a healthy relationship, and it seems like [my ex-partner] does as well. The kids are fine.

I really hope that the kids are not too badly affected by our legacy: the stuff that we inherited, the violence. When I think about violence, I do not think about me, I think about them. My grandfather died at seventy-seven years old, six months after he quit drinking. My dad quit drinking at age forty; I quit at twenty-two. Maybe my sons will not have the same experience that we did while growing up. Maybe their choices will be different; maybe alcohol will not even be a factor for them. I do not know. Hopefully the violence is also a steadily diminishing factor in their lives. I hope that it is negligible for them. That would be a measure of success for me as a parent, if I feel that they have had a safer upbringing than I did. Life is too short to live in violence.

I have learned a lot of things because of the path I have walked. Connect with the things you remember. Everybody knows the stuff that has scarred them. So if you remember something from your childhood that was painful, unpleasant, or nasty, there is a reason for it. That was a really important defining moment for you, and there is value in investigating it, trying to figure out how it has affected you. There was certainly value in it for me. Accepting all the terrible things that you feel and owning up to them is good too. Be patient with yourself. Some of these things have deep roots. It is important to be patient with yourself and with others as it relates to getting better. Change does not occur over night. But change is possible though, and my family is proof of that. We are not the healthiest bunch, but there used to be a lot more scrapping, a lot more closed fists, a lot more broken lips than there are now.

It is strange for me thinking about my parents. I know that they love each other, and they care about each other. I do not think they did a bad job of bringing us up; I think they did a good job. I am grateful for everything they did for us. Theirs is such a complex relationship. It is not simple by any means. They fought tooth and nail to make it forty years together, and they are still fighting. I still wonder how that complex, troubled, but tenacious relationship has affected my ability to be in the world.

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[299] In 2001, Winnipeg was a city of 1.2 million people. It is a city with the greatest number of Aboriginal people in Canada, where 56,000 people or eight percent of the total population are Aboriginal (Statistics Canada: 2001 Census Data). It is 965 kilometres south of Sandy Bay, 777 kilometres south of Flin Flon and accessible via Highway 10, a well-constructed highway (AAA Manitoba Saskatchewan map, 1998).

[300] Saskatoon is a city in central Saskatchewan with a population in 2001 of 207,000 people of which 20,275 or nine percent of the population are Aboriginal. It is 530 kilometres from Flin Flon and 654 kilometres from Sandy Bay along Highway 106, formerly known as the Hanson Lake Road. (AAA Manitoba Saskatchewan map, 1998) Until recently, the Hanson Lake Road was unpaved and difficult to negotiate.

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[301] The family camp consists of three sites located along Highway 135, 175 kilometres northeast of Flin Flon, and 15 kilometres southeast of Sandy Bay.

[302] McDonald (2004) in her study of children in an American inner city school reported that multiple moves and schools were the norm. Friends…become transient…The tentative nature of childhood became even more vulnerable (p. 15).

[303] Hole River, MB is the name of the community where the members of the Hollow Water First Nation live. It is located within the Precambrian Shield in Manitoba along the east side of Lake Winnipeg, one hundred ninety kilometres north-east of the city of Winnipeg (Southeast Community Futures Development Corporation, 2006).

[304] SNA's maternal grandmother over-used prescription and over-the-counter drugs.

[305] The first move was to the home of SNA's uncle and aunt in Bull River, Manitoba.

[306] Wadin Bay is a resort community on the Lac La Ronge shore, 30 kilometres north of the town of La Ronge. (AAA Manitoba Saskatchewan map, 1998) Wadin Bay was named after Jean Etienne Wadin, a Swiss free trader who established the first fur trading post on Lac La Ronge in 1779 and then was murdered. Peter Pond was another free trader who was set up a camp across the Nemeiben river from Wadin. In March 1782, Wadin and Pond had a quarrel. Shots were heard, and Pond and his clerk were seen leaving Wadin's house. Wadin had been shot, and died before explaining the shooting (SaskTel Website, 2006).

[307] The National Aboriginal Role Model Program celebrates the accomplishments of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth aged 13 to 30, thereby inspiring Aboriginal youth to strive to reach their goals (Retrieved November 24, 2006 from http://umanitoba.ca/student/asc/1070.htm).

[308] MBC: Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation, based in La Ronge, SK, is divided into MBC Network Radio, MBC TV, the Missinipi Youth Foundation and exists to preserve, protect and enhance the aboriginal cultures and languages of northern and central Saskatchewan (Retrieved November 24, 2006 from http://www.mbcradio.com/index3.html).

[309] La Ronge is a town of 2,700 people located on the southwest shore of Lac La Ronge. The area population including Air Ronge and Lac La Ronge Indian Band is reported to be 4,600. It is the largest town in northern Saskatchewan. Historically La Ronge has been a traveller's crossroads, a trading outpost, a missionary settlement, a fishery centre and a tourist Mecca. Currently, La Ronge is a service centre for almost all of northern Saskatchewan. (Northern Saskatchewan Heritage Site, 2006)

Appendix D: DA's (Daughter's) Story

When I think about significant fights that my parents had, I remember maybe four at the most, where I remember bad things happening and things that I will never forget. I think that the earliest fight that I remember, I was two years old. It was not the physical fight that I remember, it was the aftermath. It was waking up in the morning and my mom not getting out of bed, going to her, and knowing something was wrong. That little, and already knowing they had been fighting: knowing that she could not get out of bed, seeing the black eyes. It was, Ho - lee! Two years old, I thought it was just in my head. I did not think I could remember that far back.

One of my strongest memories of our house in Winnipeg is my dad being on the couch. It seemed like he was always on the couch, always sleeping on the couch and I do not know if I thought he was lazy or if he was passed out on the couch all the time or what it was. But when I think about that house and I think about the inside, it seems that he was on the couch almost eighty percent of the time.

I remember SNA phoning the police to get my dad out of the house once. I think he was only seven or eight years old. He had to do that. I remember him physically steering me away, telling me things.

SNA told me, "Let us go in the room and play. Come on!" He never wanted to play with me. That time he really wanted me to go in my room and we would play. I remember he convinced me because he said, "Come on, I will sit here with your dolls. We will have a tea party."

And I was like, "Wooo!" [Laughter]

We had the little table and chairs. He followed me and he got me going there. Then he left because he wanted to see what was happening, he had to make sure everything was okay. I would go to the door and he would say, "No, no, no. Do not follow me. Come on. Come and sit down. I am just getting this and I am just getting that." We would sit back down and we would start playing. As soon as I started playing on my own, he would be gone.

That was the time when he called the cops on my dad. That is my strongest memory of actually seeing the violence. I will never forget the look in my dad's face, the look in his eyes, and the fear in my mom's voice. The look on her face because she hit him with a green wine bottle and there was red wine in it. They were sitting in a circle on the floor with some other friends. I do not know how it started or what they were up to but I just remember my mom turning to him and hitting him with that bottle. He was looking at her and she hit him with it. Then there was red all over from the wine and the smashed bottle. After it smashed, he was still sitting there, just staring at her.

He did not even blink an eye and then I knew, "Oh no!" That was when my brother took me to the room, and I did not see much more. I saw a little bit of it because I kept going out, but the majority of it he was right there. He was watching. My uncle got involved that time. He was so intoxicated, he did not even realise what he was doing, and he ended up fighting my mom too. She was in the closet, they were kicking her, and then my uncle snapped out of it, and took my dad off.

I have a memory blank of about two years. There is a blank and I just do not remember things. I think it started around when mom had her miscarriage[310] because I remember I was supposed to have a sister and she was supposed to be born on my birthday. Every year when it was my birthday I remembered it. She would have been this age. I do not know if the blank in my memory had to do with all the stuff going on. I know that it was during this time where a lot of things changed with my parents because it seemed to bring them closer together.

I told my mom, "It must have been really terrible." I tell her what years and she does not see it. She does not know what was so horrible that I cannot remember. I do not know. From what I remember before and what I remember after, it was not that terrible. I see so many people around town that had it so much worse. Now I know it was not that terrible. It was not that horrible at all.

I remember getting a lickin'[311] with a belt and a stick and getting soap in my mouth and now I know that that is abuse. I did not know about it then but I was able to come to terms with it because that was what my parents knew. They thought they were doing the right thing. They thought by doing that they were teaching something I needed to learn or that they were steering me away from something I was not supposed to be doing. It was hard. Today I cannot give my children a lickin' because they are just going to do it more. They will find a reason and be hurt. I know I was hurt for a lot of years and I do not want to do that to my children. In just getting older and thinking about it more, I accepted it and I never held that against them because I know now that I would not be where I am at if they did not do that to me. Because I see the young ones that do not get any discipline. They do not even get a stern talking to or when they are out of line, they do not get a lickin' or nothing like that, and they are just lost. At least me, I had that conscience and that voice instilled in my head. When I am doing something that I should not be doing, something triggers and I know I should not be doing that.

I have always found an alternative way of dealing with my kids and I have always vowed that I would use those ways. If I do not use other ways of disciplining my kids, then they could go grow up and be rebellious, not lucky enough to come to the realisations that I came to. They might turn it around and end up being even more rebellious or resenting me, not understanding it like I understood it. I am not going to be like that. My favourite thing with my fourteen year old is I ground him. Just ask my son. I think once he turned thirteen that was a regular thing. I would never raise my hand to him but he sure does get grounded. I find that when something happens, it is so hard. It was so hard at first when he hit thirteen because that was the way I was raised. I was twelve years old, got caught smoking and I got a lickin'. My son was only thirteen and got caught smoking. My first instinct was give him a good lickin'. Then I thought, "No, I cannot. I would not be able to live with myself."

I still have to stop myself. A week ago, we had a bad situation where my son was involved with other boys, they were doing things they were not supposed to, and it was real serious. That was my first instinct that night too. But then I am glad too because if I start to think like that, then I see my husband get riled up and he will be even more gung ho to give him a lickin'. I am able to snap out of it and say, "No. I cannot do that." That night I was so mad I told my son, "I cannot even look at you. I just do not know what to think. I cannot talk to you because you are not in any stage to hear anything I am saying. I cannot give you a lickin' because you are just going to do it more.

You will find a reason and you will be hurt." I know I was hurt for a lot of years and I do not want to do that to my boy.

My mom sent me to Calder[312] as a young teenager at a time when I drank a lot and my parents were really afraid that I was an alcoholic. I am so glad she did now because I learned so much and I was able to see things so now I know what it is and I know what signs to watch for. She sent me there for two years in a row and I was mad at her for sending me there the first year because I was the youngest one. That was only natural, because all my peers were older than me. If she had not sent me, I would not have known what I needed to know, and today, I would not be able to recognise things.

I remember my mom always telling me, "You do not have to be like that if you do not want to be." She would say, "You do not have to be miserable if you do not want to be. You do not have to be grouchy if you do not want to be. You can be happy if you will just smile and it will come. You cannot be mad for long and do not hold a grudge because it does not do any good." She would give me those little lectures.

I remember my mom when I was eleven or twelve years old. She just blew everybody away because there was someone in our house that was drunk, sitting there and being a pest. My dad was not giving him a drink. He was just there, bugging my mom for a smoke, asking repeatedly for a cigarette. She got fed up with him asking her. She just hauled off and backhanded this guy. He went flying back and he had a bleeding nose. She went into her room and we were all afraid. We did not know what was going to happen. We did not know what was wrong with her. We did not know what she was doing in there. We had never seen her do that, just snap and freak out, physically hit somebody. Then we found out that she was in the room crying, she felt so bad about what she had done.

The next day that guy came back, she apologised to him, and we were all thinking to ourselves, "I wonder why Mom said sorry to him." We thought he deserved it, and that it was cool. Mom is always mellow, Mom is always the calm voice, the voice of reason, and she snapped. We agreed with her totally and now she was saying she was sorry. That blew me away.

I thought, "He is never going to quit coming around now."

Since then, I have never seen my mom get to that point when she even comes close to snapping. It takes a lot of will power because once you can see the signs, it is too far. I think now that she is able to stop herself even before she gets there because you never see her get to that point. I see her get very angry, but I never see her get close to that point where she is going to snap. She is able to stop, take herself out of the situation, think, analyse things, cool down, and then come back with a calm head.

My mom's thing when we were hurt or she was mad, she would go to bed. She would go to bed and she would go to bed early. It was not unusual for her to go to bed early but she would go to bed earlier then usual, sleep in, and she would stay in bed. No motivation to get up, no motivation to do what she would regularly do. When my mom finally did tell me some of the things she went through with her parents then I realised why my mom was the way she was: why she would crawl into bed when she was upset. I believe it was because that is what she saw when she was growing up. She did not have a lot of the support and the physical love that I had.

There was one time when my dad was still drinking in the house in Wabash Bay and I was eight years old. I think my mom had already quit drinking, He was still drinking, and I was there with him. He was passed out and she was gone. We had an ironing board and the iron was plugged in and shut off but it was melting. It had shorted out. I could not wake up my dad. I had to take care of it myself. When I think about it now it was so crazy because I tried to wake him up, but he would not get up so I figured I would do it myself. It had already burned through the ironing board and it was making put her foot down on the floor. I wrapped my hand.

Typical kid, "If it is hot, then you combat it with cold." I wrapped my hand up in wet tea towels and then one dry one over top and I pulled out the plug. I am so lucky I survived that because now I know you do not do that. That is not the way. Mom came home and all hell broke loose because of what happened. I think it was right after that my dad quit drinking. It was not long after. I remember him telling me he was not going to drink any more. Not long after I remember him telling me that he was not going to drink any more. Then he quit drinking.

I do not remember a specific time, a specific year, or a significant event to cause a turn around. The only conclusion I can come to about why the violence stopped or how it stopped, I give a lot of credit to my mom when she put her foot down. She finally figured out for herself or for us, I do not know who she did it for, but she figured out it was not good. It was not right. When things really got bad, we moved to Saskatoon. I remember that move, it was in the middle of the year. It was a new school, a whole new atmosphere from being in Sandy Bay: all the freedom and then going to the city and not having

The moment that I knew that we could not be together, the moment that defined our eventual split for me was when our son was about three months old. She was trying to get into a physical fight with me while she was holding our son in one hand. She was coming at me with her free hand. I just knew, "I cannot do this." I could not bear to imagine my children seeing what I had seen as a kid, nor could I imagine them living through what I had lived through. I did not want that for them. That was the moment I gave up. About nine months later we split, but that was the moment when I knew that my heart could not be there. I could not deal with it. I just could not imagine doing that to the little ones.

I was with her from 1996 until 2000. We had a period where violence was active in our house, and it was devastating: one of the most horrible things that I have ever experienced in my whole life. In some way it was worse than the first time around with my mom and dad because it was happening to me now. I felt helpless; I guess I felt a lot of things I probably felt the first time around, but I felt exasperated, like I should have had the power to choose. I felt like I was an active participant; I should have been able to do something different, but it worked out the way it did. I never hit my partner but she hit me a lot. The violence in that relationship did a number in my head. It affected me and I think I am still affected because when that relationship was over a lot of it just sat there. It has been five years since we split, so there is probably stuff I can go back and deal with. There were children involved: my son, and my stepson. I always wondered, "How could my mom and dad stick it out for so long?" I just could not do it. I buckled. There was no way that I could stay. I made a choice that I would rather that my kids grow up in an environment where the two of us lived apart but worked together, than for us to be together and the violence be the result. I just could not bear to imagine them seeing what I saw growing up.

I imagine that being a kid that was close to violence had to have affected the way that I responded to it when I was an adult. I might have been able to deal with it more effectively had I not had a background in it. I did not really find out a lot of things about my ex-partner until we moved in together, which was a year and half after we got together. Once we moved in together, some of the misconceptions I had and what the real deal was became pretty clear. Part of it was the violence, and part of it was the drinking.

When faced with it, I had feelings of helplessness, confusion, sorrow, anger, and despair. I spent time wondering, "What am I doing to cause this? What am I doing to contribute to this?" I could not figure it out the answer to that one because I had never had violence in an intimate relationship before, and I have not had it since. I still am not really sure what I was doing to contribute to it, but I am sure that my experience as a kid has to have been a factor. I felt helpless. I felt a lot of things that I probably felt when my parents fought physically. I felt exasperated, like I should have had the power to choose what was going on or like I was an active participant. The violence was a big factor in us splitting up. I always wondered, "How could my mom and dad stick it out for so long?"

My staying in the increasingly violent relationship as long as I did stay had something to do with me trying to live down my own pattern as an adult where I leave too soon. In this relationship, I decided that I was not going to leave this time. It turned out that the smart thing to do was to leave, but I did remember walking down the street and being mad. I remember seeing him and knowing it was already in my head, what I would do to him, what I was going to say, how I was going to instigate something or hurt him. I walked up to him and he did not see any of it coming because I never, ever fought with him. It was always him hitting and I would not. This time, though, I was mad and I remember looking at him. He was looking at me in a funny way. I did not know why he had a puzzled look on his face. I put my leg in between his two and behind one and I just threw him down the ground. I was going to kick him in the face but he jumped up. He was lucky. Then my cousin saw me and came running. He could not believe it. He had never seen anything like that, especially out of me. I was always laughing and joking. He had never seen a serious side or an angry side. Afterward I felt so bad. I was in major guilt. I went home alone. I did not know if he was going to come home and I did not know if he was going to retaliate because I had embarrassed him in front of his friends. I was just waiting and he came. He came home and his eyes were big. He was in shock that I had done that.

He said, "You hit me. You hurt me."

I said, "Yeah, now you know what it feels like, now you know what I went through every time you did that and you did way worse than push me down."

He said, "I knew something was wrong but I did not know what. I saw you and I swear to God your eyes were red."

I said, "I was mad." When I think about it, I remember pushing him down and I remember trying to kick him. I did not remember a few seconds and I knew that was what he was talking about. My eyes were red. I was in that fit of rage and it brought back all those memories of all those times when I lost my temper when I was younger and how afraid I was at that time. When it happened this time I was very afraid. I did not know what was going to happen or if he was going to end up leaving me. We already had our son; he was a couple of years old. I was so afraid, and I felt so guilty. I was crying and I tried to talk to him.

I told him, "We cannot do this." I figured that I was stronger and I told him about what happened when I was younger and I told him how I had said that I would never do that. I told him about how I always said I would never fight with anybody or hurt anybody that I cared about, and that I broke all my promises to myself.

I just told him, "We cannot live like this, it has to stop. If you continue, I cannot guarantee I will be able to stop and I cannot guarantee this will not happen again."

He was really afraid and I ended up moving away. I moved away because I did not know what to do. It was turning into a power struggle. He did not come up with it; it was not his idea. He resisted so I ended up moving away. We were separated for four months. I would not give in and I would not come back. I enrolled in school and daycare, and decided I was going to live in La Ronge.

I was going to do what I had to do because I had the realisation, "I have got a child to look after for seventeen years. I do not even have my Grade 12. How am I going to do this?" When my husband finally came back, I thought, "We will try it. We will see." I vowed that I was not going through violence, but I could not write it off just like that. My son needed a father and

I had to give him a fair chance. Running away like that really did not solve much. It gave us time to cool off, to look at things differently, and to realise what was important and what we wanted. I knew after four months that my husband was serious. He was committed to actually trying to do something about what he said. I told him that. "If that happens when we are here, I will not think twice. I will boot you out and I cannot say that you will be so lucky to have another chance."

Six or eight months later we got into an argument. My husband pushed me. He pushed once and I turned around, grabbed his face, and smashed his head into the wall. I was so angry that he actually had the nerve to do it again after all that work and everything we were going through, trying to achieve. I got him a ride home that day. I told him, "No, you are still not ready." I blamed everything on him and I sent him away. I got him a ride and told my brother to come and check on me. I told him everything that happened. My brother freaked right out. He was ready to come there, and give my husband a lickin'. He had hurt his little sister. My brother showed up at the house and he stormed in. He was mad and he wanted to know where my husband was. I did not like the look in his eyes. I told him, "He is already gone. I got him a ride and he is gone." My husband was so lucky. If he had been there he would have gotten a beating from my brother.

I sent my brother home and I cooled off. I thought to myself, "I had just as much to do with that and I was just as guilty as he was. He did not do it all on his own and I was blaming him for everything, not changing him. Not only had I participated in the argument, nor had I recognised or stopped it before it got out of hand, but I smashed his head into the wall. What is worse from someone who was never violent before towards him, and then all of a sudden, snaps, and then blames him for everything?" I felt just horrible. I phoned him, and I told him how bad I felt.

I told him, "I do not blame you if you do not want to come back and you do not have to come back. I do not think you should come back. I would not come back to me."

He was really afraid. He did not know what to expect because in his life the cycle of violence was so strong and he started to realise, "Yeah, it was not all me." He was already accepting all the blame, it took him a while to digest all that and decide, "Yeah, we will try." From that time on, we made a pact that we were not going to do that.

If it came down to the point where we had to yell, "Time out!" or whatever the signal was, we would not boil over. We would not let ourselves get to that point when we could not control ourselves. To get that angry, to talk and to be angry is one thing, but to keep going and keep pushing and not let go until it explodes in physical violence is quite another thing.

My dad, I know when he got mad; when he got to a certain point, partly because he was sobering up, he would not hit my mom. He would walk away. You could just see it in his face, he would be so upset, but he would go in his room. He would go and sit in there with the dead bolt on that door. He would go and lock himself in his room. My dad, now when he gets upset, he will go in his room.

I told my dad recently that I was not letting him go up north. I told him, "You are not going anywhere. I do not care if you call it manipulation or control or but you are not going anywhere. I do not care if I have to get dirty, play games, manipulate or make you feel guilty, but you are not going anywhere."

It was just because I did not want anything to happen. He has such bad health problems. He was good about it. He tried to get mad and then he caught himself. He started laughing and he made a joke of it. I told him, "You are not going anywhere." Then he phoned me, after I did it to him three times like that in front of his peers. I told him, "You are not going anywhere." I told those boys, "You guys are not taking my dad anywhere this year, maybe next year."

My dad was mad that one day because I said that right in front of his friends but he would not lecture me. He turned around, went, and sat in his bedroom. I knew he was upset but not that upset, not in a hurtful way. It was more just realising that he really could not go anywhere and that I was right, but that he did not want to say that I was right. If I had been younger and tried to tell him what to do, he would have chewed me up. Later he phoned me. He was brave because I was not in his face.

I said, "I know you are going to give me this lecture about I cannot tell you what to do when you are sixty-five years old, you lived your life, you raised me, you are a grandparent, and I have no business telling you what to do. I know you can get mad and you can hang up on me and not talk to me. I know you can pout and you will not talk to me but I am still going to say it. I do not care if I have to break skidoos, but you are not going anywhere."

My dad knew it was hopeless and he started giggling. He said, "I will run away, and then I will run away."

I said, "I am so young and I am so fat. Even though I am pregnant, I will catch you."

We were talking, and my dad was not going anywhere. I know him so good. He was going to go more for the sake of those guys who had their hearts set on going. He knew he could not go but he could not admit it just like that. "Yeah, my thirty-two year old daughter is right, she knows me. She knows my health. She knows that I am not going to jeopardise myself. I can go next year. I can go in the summer when I save money; I can fly out there. Because when I go, it is hard work and dangerous."

With his health, I just told him, "You are not going anywhere."

My friends were all scared of my dad when I was a kid. They were all scared of my dad and I told them it was just his mouth. "He just talks loud."

I heard them saying, "His bark is worse than his bite."

I say that too. "My dad is a big pussy cat; he has just got a loud bark. Do not be afraid."

Some of my friends know him and they always talk about him. One of them really cares for my dad. She makes him bannock and she says, "Everybody used to be scared of your dad. Now I know he is just a mellow old man."

My brother is a big softy. Big for nothing, he is as soft as kitten; he would not hurt a fly. When we were kids, I was the one who was physical and beat the other kids up. When I was younger, I was so much like my dad when he was rowdy. I used to hear stories. I would go there and those boys would always say, "Your dad is the strongest man in town."

I remember my granny when she quit drinking because she told me that she was going to. It was Thanksgiving. That was one of the reasons why I chose Thanksgiving weekend to get married because I remember that and how important it was. It will always stick in my head. She made that promise and she kept it. She never drank again from that day forward. That is why I am so close to her. That is the reason that I came back to Sandy Bay. Otherwise, I would have lived in Fort Smith or I would have gone back to P.A., but it was the thought of my granny being here and none of her kids really here. My dad is here but he travels so much and he is so busy. Then my uncle is here, but he travels so much and he so busy. I would phone her, she would be lonely, and giving me this spiel that, "There is nobody to look after me. I am getting old." All her kids are gone and it was not like she blames them. There was no blame there.

It was just that I thought, "It is my duty being that my brother and me were the only ones raised here of all the grandkids. I have roots here because of that and because she is here."

I am so glad my parents taught me enough and they had that tough love. They kicked me out when I was fifteen. If they had not kicked me out when I was fifteen, I do not know where I would be, what I would be because I would not have learned what I know now. I would not have known right and wrong and what I can take and what I cannot take because it was hard to live on my own. My mom said that to me. She knew that when she kicked me out. She knew that I was not coming back. And she did not know if it was hurt or if it was pride. She said she just knew it; there was no way I was going to be back. I think now I am like more like my mom because I am starting to see things. I have come to so many realisations and I could understand so much more. It is such a big picture.

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[310] The miscarriage occurred in October 1978.

[311] Lickin' is a colloquial term meaning a physical beating. "I am going to hang a lickin' on him." For a child, a lickin' usually means a spanking or being struck on the butt for the purpose of correction.

[312] The Calder Centre Youth Program is a 12-bed inpatient treatment program that
provides stabilization services to adolescents and families with chemical dependency
issues (Calder Centre Program Description, 2004, p. 10).

[313] 'clock' is a colloquial term meaning 'hit."

[314] In her study of an inner city school in the American Midwest, McDonald (2004) reported similar episodes of guardians teaching children to stand up for themselves (p. 14). Wertsch (1985) noted that each culture provided children with the necessary technical and psychological tools so that they could become full participants (p. 78).

[315] Artz and Nicholson (2002) assert that one reason that girls often act out aggressively is to secure social dominance or to avoid being controlled or victimized by others (p. 6).

Appendix E: BA's (Brother's) Story

First off, I will tell you just a little history about my family. My father was always gentle, but there was drinking involved. My mother was loud and aggressive when need be, not all the time, but when need be such as when we did not obey her. We grew up on a trap line; we depended on the environment for everything. We got our clothing from stores, but food-wise the only things that we bought were lard, tea, sugar, flour and just the basic things. Most of our food we got from the environment. Then as we got older, as HA got older, he helped my father to support the family. So it was always work, work, work, all the time. Every once in a while they would go on a booze binge, both my dad and HA, and sometimes I would tag along.

When we moved to Sandy Bay, the boozing escalated. It was the late 1950s and early 1960s. There was a lot of drinking and a lot of violence; even children were drinking. I remember seeing windows open in the wintertime with little children inside. Then we moved to Flin Flon, and I did not want to be part of that anymore. With all that drinking, we would work all summer and all winter to accumulate materials like motors and nets. Then come fall those materials would get drank up and we would go back to the same. I did not want to do that anymore; I wanted something better. So I left. I started to work in different places, trying to be on my own, trying to find my way.

When I was trying to find my way in Flin Flon, I met WA. I met her a couple of years before she met HA. She was just a teenager, and she was looking. It seemed that she came from a nice family but for whatever reason she was looking. She was like a typical teenage girl is with boys, boy-crazy.

That is how I met WA , through friends. I partied with her and different people.

I went south, met SA, and stayed with her. I was really surprised; all of us were surprised, when all of a sudden I heard HA was with WA . They got married, came to Winnipeg, and stayed with us for a while. HA was very manipulative toward WA and me and to my younger siblings. He was the older one; he brought in the bacon and eggs so to speak and he was demanding towards us. He was in control over us. When I got married, that same control was there. I am sixty-two and I am still fighting that control. At that time, they came and stayed with us, but there was a little bit too much ordering me around. I got uncomfortable. My children were small; HA and WA did not have any children yet. I was glad that they moved out. When they stayed with us, I saw all of this violence, and him going drinking with different people, making money, and leaving his family. The same thing happened that had happened with fishing. He would go and make money, then go drinking and leave his family. Then he would be okay for a little while, and then start drinking. I knew about the violence with WA, but what could I do? That is what I thought. I did not interfere very much; I did not bother with him in that respect, but I knew that it happened.

If I were to say what caused the violence, I would think that it is several things. First of all my mother was in a residential school, there was abuse in the residential school. Then with us, she was very strict, like the way the Catholics are, almost like military type. My father was in residential school too, but not for very long. He was different, a gentle kind of a person. Whatever happened in the church and in the residential school carried on, and my dad. So I remember and I knew all the conflict that went along with it and I knew why we moved. It was because of them not getting along and her not wanting to be stuck in the rut and having to put up with that because it was the norm and a lot of women just lived like that and accepted it.

Her moving us to Saskatoon was for the best and ended up working out good. I remember when we moved, it was bad. I did not like it. I had no friends, no freedom, and all kinds of horrible experiences like getting lost in Saskatoon. I missed my dad and my family. Then, when we came back to Sandy Bay, it was like a honeymoon time and then it did not get totally worse. Stuff happened and there were still major arguments, but there was never that fear. It just seemed like it went from yelling and fighting and abuse, physical violence, to yelling and saying really mean, hurtful things and someone crying and walking out, and then it went to arguing and yelling. Then nobody cried and someone leaving. Then it went from just arguing, to just arguing with very little voice rising but somebody always leaving.

There were always drunks around my dad; it was just a fact of life. I remember a few of them sitting around and he was giving them a drink. He was sitting there with them but he was not drinking. They would start to get rowdy and mouthy and a few times I had seen him clock[313] them when he was sober. I had never seen him do it to my mom for years and years but he would do it to them.

I figured, "It was better them than my mom." Maybe that is why he did not hit my mom. Because he got it in now and then with those other guys.

I was living up to being rowdy. I was being my dad's daughter and that is why I had to prove I was tough. I had to beat up those girls. I could not let things like that slide because my dad was the toughest man in town. I could not go home crying.

I would go home crying and my dad would tell me, "Do not let them do that to you. Somebody teases you, you give him one good one in the nose; they will bleed and they will never tease you again. You have to stand up for yourself."[314]

I was being told that all the time. He said, "You are always going to have people teasing you. You are always going to have people that do not like you." I learned right away that I had to defend myself.

I prided myself in being just like my dad and I had some rowdy fights. I remember being a bully. I was always picked on, always teased because I was bigger than everybody was[315], and I was chubby. I was physically faster than other girls were. I learned right away, my brother taught me to stand up for myself. They tease you, you do it to them once, and they will not tease you again. I do not know how many boys I made cry because they were always the worst. I fought more boys than girls when I was a little kid. It was always the boys.

I was tall and all my life my peers were always three years older than me. When I was five, my friends were eight. It was just steady like that all my life. When I was twelve, all my friends were fifteen. Their friends would tease them and I hung around with them so then I would get teased. I was just as big as they were, and some of them were sixteen. I would get so frustrated and so tired of being teased, I just wanted to get even.

I fought four distinct fights; one was with two sisters. Those two sisters still remember that until this day. One is my age and one a year younger. They were teasing me and yelling at me. I was with one of my friends who was surprised. She could not believe I was actually going to go talk to those girls. I just turned around right in the center of town, went up to them, and told them that they should not do that. I warned them and I walked away. I figured they would quit; I figured that I had scared them. I did not know that those girls were high, so all their mightiness came out. I was walking away and they were yelling at me. I was afraid to get beat up because there were two of them but I was fed up.

I just told my friend, "Just make sure I do not get beat up. If I am starting to get beat up, come and drag me out." I went back. I was so full of anger and excited, I gave both of them a lickin'. I do not even remember. I was that mad. At twelve or thirteen years old, I had a black out. It was a fit of rage. I remember going after them and then the next thing that I remember, I had one of them on the ground, and one of them was on the ground over there. The girl's head was right by a big rock and someone was lifting me up. I was on my knees. I do not know if I was punching her but a guy came, lifted me up, turned me over, turned me around, and put me down. He stopped me and my friends. I could not stop.

There was a whole bunch of people standing there watching. I got up and I kind of came out of it and I told those girls, "Never talk about me again and do not ever tease me again, do not talk about me behind my back, and do not put me down." I walked away. Those girls came from a big family. They had four or five older sisters. I said, "I am not scared of them. If they want to fight me, they will fight me."

Then when we walked away and my friend started to tell me, "You were really mad." She said I grabbed that girl's head and slammed it into a rock.

I told my friend, "No way. I do not believe you." I did my own little investigating, talking to this one, that one, and all of them said the same thing. I did this and I did that. I could not believe I did that. That happened with me that time and then I was afraid of my anger.

I could fight girls but I could never hit anybody that I cared about. I remember telling that to my husband when we would fight. I would instigate the fight sometimes, because I knew how to push his buttons until he would hit me. I would say to him, "I cannot ever hit you back. I do not care if you give me two black eyes." He did once. He hit me right in my forehead. I do not think that it was his intention to hit me there but it was a fight and I was trying to get away. He hit me right in the middle of my forehead and I had two black eyes. Our oldest son was just a new born. I told him that I could not live like that and I could not ever hit him back no matter how mad I got. I am not like that. I made a vow to myself years ago that I was not going to hurt the people that I love. That was from seeing my parents fight. I thought, "I am not going to do that." My husband and I had our rocky times. He would physically fight and I would never retaliate. Part of it was I made that vow that I was never going to do that, and part of it was that I was afraid if I unleashed then I would freak out and really hurt him.

I remember one time when I really got upset with my husband. To this day I do not even know why I was upset. It just came out and I had no control, I was so mad. He did not even see it coming. It was at my cousin's house. I that I could not fit in. The only place that I felt I was accepted was what was called at that time, Main Street, and that was skid row. I was accepted there, so that is where I worked. When I went into the city, I was really looking at people. They were just walking statues. I could not just go and talk to anybody to be friendly. In Sandy Bay, you just spoke to everybody; everybody was your friend. Even when I came to Flin Flon, I could not do that. I could only talk to the ones I was associated with. Then the city, it was worse. I accidentally met my wife there.

When people do not see a future, confidence is shot. Then the choice is either drinking or staying at home and going crazy. I know that every time I do not work and if I am staying at home, I start getting very bitter. I always have to be doing something. I always have to be bringing in some kind of an income to help my wife. We Native people have always been providers. We worked very hard to make a living from the environment. When we started losing our trapping, fishing, and hunting, naturally the alcohol and the drugs began escalating. There is no hope when you get just enough on welfare to get by.

There are poor people throughout North America, and the poorest people are in Native community[321] reserves. The highest population in penal institutions[322] are Natives. It is not because they are bad but those ones that I feel are questioning get taken out of society. If there is no hope, then what is the use of going on? With the violence and the drinking, there is bitterness. We have become a commodity as Native people. We have a become a commodity where the more people help us, then they get paid, and we do not get anything more. They gain from our misfortune; that is how I see it.[323] I understand these things through the counselling that I do and through my traditional ways that I do.

I did not drink very much. I started drinking in my early twenties, when I was old enough to start drinking. I started drinking because I thought I was feeling good, but then after a while I started feeling bitter. When I met my wife, I was angry and I knew I could be violent towards her, but I did not want that. I never really, really, really, really drank.

There was no future in Sandy Bay and I became angry, but I did not want to take it out on her or my kids. I thought back to my family, and I did not want that lifestyle. That is why I left home. I wanted to find a different way of life in Winnipeg when I had spent most of my life on the trap line. I did not want to bring up my children on the trap line, because there were times when my father and HA could not catch anything to eat. There were times when we went through hunger. A couple of times when I was young, probably about ten years old, I can remember thinking very clearly, "I wonder if I am going to live tomorrow." I was having stomach cramps from no food. At that time there was no welfare and my father could not get any animals for pelts. They could not catch fish. I remember my dad was going to go and try to get some food, and my mother sent my two older brothers to go where they had set nets in the fall to go and dig up the guts so she could make something out of it. I remember that I was so hungry for whatever she made out of that, some kind of soup.

There are a lot of things that happened. These things do not just happen to people; it goes back to history. I questioned why there was no compensation in Sandy Bay when they talked about the reserve. I questioned our old priest.

My mother always said, "You never question the priest," but I questioned different things, and I got heck from the priest. The priest was very controlling with my parents, especially my mother. My dad was supposed to be head of the household, but my mother actually was. When this priest left, another one came in either 1951 or 1952, and took control of the whole community. Priests and ministers were very controlling to the people because they were the *Father*. Even if the priests were violent, and people knew that violence or even sexual abuse was happening, it was okay because it was a worker of God. I suppose that a lot of the sexual abuse that we have now comes from the people of God.

My brother has changed, but he is still loud and demanding. I just met with him and he is demanding. A couple of hours ago in Sandy Bay, I did not agree with him, and right away he got very loud when I questioned what he wanted me to do. When he gets loud, I usually know to back off and shut up. He keeps talking to me, knowing it is not the time. I could feel that old feeling, he was not in control, and I am not going to let him do that.

I do not go to see him very much. I love HA very much, but I am going to be angry with him if I spend a lot of time with him because of him being demanding. I choose not to be around him because I do not want to get mad at him. I look at my whole family that way, because it is very hard to get along with all of us. We all have an attitude toward each other; we all have some kind of challenges and animosities towards each other, and I choose not to do that. I come to Sandy Bay only once in a while. I come for a quick visit, and then I am gone.

My wife and I started teaching in 1975 and 1976, and then broke up in 1976. That was our lowest point. We quit drinking in 1977, and I am not saying that it has been easy. It was rough, but at least we knew how to deal with things. My wife was not the boss and I was not the boss. I suppose that the control was taken away from me in 1976, when she became independent. We used to talk about that, that I was no longer the boss and that she wanted control. From the time we were married up to the time she started University, I was bringing in the bread and butter, so I was in control of paying the bills. Then she went to the university and she wanted independence. I fought that to a point where we broke up in 1976 because I was losing control.

During that time when we broke up, I came to Sandy Bay. I had a lot of time to think, and I began to understand that control. I saw it; I did not want it anymore. Now she does not want control either, but now she gets tired. "Why am I always doing this?"

I do not say anything, but I would like to say something about that. "You wanted it, take it!"

Both my wife and I are working. Together, we are making good money as teachers, but we are only living day by day, payday to payday, because we help but we do not talk about it. We distribute what we have with other people. That is what my mother taught us. I suppose HA distributes to other people too, but not to the family. Most of my family are like that. They will distribute to other people, but not to family. I guess we think that if we can survive, then our family members can survive too.

They say medicine healers are very good. I know of one medicine man who was very good in the community as a healer, but the change of his environment hurt him. His daughter married a non-Native and they moved to the city. For some reason, the daughter did not want to leave her father, so he went so that she would go and live with her husband in the city. Somewhere along the line, the daughter died. Then the son-in-law did not have any more use for the old man, and sent him out. He ended up on skid row, and that is where he died. It is a change of the environment, always. In Sandy Bay, even with the drinking, there is getting along with people: laughing, and enjoying each other's company. Even when I was out drinking, some of my friends are my company. Even if they are drinking and I am not, it is the association until they get start getting rough.

Flin Flon is a racist place. The Pas is a racist place. They, the non-Natives, are in power and why not be a racist, if you are in power? In Selkirk, Manitoba, they are very racist. Winnipeg is a very racist city. Every community I have been to, I see racism. I have been called a wagon-burner. I have never burned anybody's wagon, but there are times when those comments are made. Unless I go to the media, nothing is done. There are racists in every police force; that is life. No matter how they try to change it, it will not change.

Different people from all parts of the world come to Canada and form communities. Let us just think about this, how do you think we feel? On the reserve we have our own little country. As soon as we step out of the reserve, it is a different country with different laws. I am not a Canadian. My community within the reserve is a different country from Canada. That is how the provincial and federal governments look at us. We are a different race; we are not Canadians. It is evident in everything that happens. When I go and try to look for help from the Provincial government, they answer, “No, you are Federal.” Then I go to the Federal office and ask for help and they answer, “Oh, you are Provincial.” They do not even know where we belong. But when it comes to taking something from us, then everybody knows where we belong. It has always been like that. Even as a child, I understood that. How many other people that will not talk about that, understand that? I mean, they understand that, but will not talk about how we are treated.

I used to question my mother about what non-Natives did to me. She would say ‘Quiah,[324]’ “That is okay, okay. It is all right.” It was the same with my father. I have seen non-Natives putting him down when he was trying to get nets to make a living. They would not let him be involved in co-operative fishing at Reindeer Lake.

I asked him, “Well, why not?”

“That is okay. Leave it. Quiah. Quiah. That is okay.” He did not want to raise any stink because this group of non-Natives did not want him to be involved in the cooperative. He had a family. There was a very strong group of non-Natives; they were not married. Some of them were married, but they did not have children. They would not let this family man with eight children get a few nets to be involved. I always questioned, even with the church I questioned, and my mother would get mad at me.

I just wanted to know some things. “Why is this? Explain it to me, I want to know.” But it did not work, now I know. But at that time, I wanted to know; I wanted to learn.

There were twelve of us born to our mother and father, but there were no hospitals and no medical help, so three passed away as infants and my oldest brother passed away in 1962 at the age of 25 in St. Anthony's hospital in Brandon. When he passed away, we were at the trap line and out of food. It was only by accident that my father was fooling around with a radio, trying to turn on the Northern News. The Northern News had sent a message to my father and mother: "Your son passed away two weeks ago." We were at the trap line. We knew that he was very sick. He was born with a tumour inside his ear. They took it out, and then it came back. That is what he died from. We were at the trap line that we heard the news that our brother passed away. The funeral had already taken place. I found the gravesite. I think I am the only one who knows where it is in Brandon. What I want to do is to get a stone put on there so we can take my mother there before she moves on. That is what we are planning to do, but we are so busy. We want to try to take the whole family there, to meet us there, and to go and honour my brother's grave.

A lot of these things play into how we all were, how we all turned out the way we did. I remember when we were living at the trap line, my sister passed away in late March or early April. She passed away, and we started making our way from there. Two people, my uncle and another man, came with us. We had one dog team. The dog team carried the coffin and the rest of us, even the little kids, walked all the way from Reindeer Lake, all the way to Sandy Bay. It was starting to melt at times, and along the shore, it was already open so far. They would walk across the water with the coffin on their heads, taking turns. Then they would take turns carrying us across. I was very small but I remember coming down the Churchill River. Sometimes we could not walk on the ice; it was unstable so we would just walk along the shore. When we got here, I cannot remember the funeral. The same thing happened when we went to Pukatawagan. Another brother, an infant, passed away over there. I can remember us going with the baby, but I cannot remember coming back with the baby. I cannot remember that funeral.

Anger develops when people are not working and they have to stay home. That is not the only reason, but it is one of the strongest that I have. To get out of the violence, people need something to feel good, that they are working.

With my wife and me, there was a little bit of drinking when we got to the university. I started University in 1971 and my wife started in 1973. After we got married, my wife did not drink at all, not until University, and she would not have started if I did not. But I did not influence her to drink. Whenever we got together with our friends at the university to socialise, they drank so we drank. This carried on from 1973 until we broke up in 1976 for two or three months. On New Years Eve, 1977, we decided we were going to quit drinking because our children asked us to quit drinking. We talked about it and we said, "Okay, we will quit drinking for the kids and for ourselves." We quit drinking in 1977. We were actually drinking for probably three or four years. It was not all the time, but it came to a point where we started going out almost every weekend to have fun. It was not fun. Other people called it fun, though, so we called it fun. It was not fun. Our children asked us to quit drinking. We talked about it, and then we quit drinking.

Whether it is positive or negative, if people have a cause, something to take over when they are drinking. Even with HA, if he had a cause then he would not drink. Even when he was really drinking, if there was a cause, then he would not drink. But he has always been aggressive with everyone, not only with the family, but with other people too. Bang, bang, then he would be ready to talk after knocking somebody to their senses or whatever. He would have been a different person if he had not been taken from the trap line, because he was in control there. His community and his control was taken away from him, and he drank.

He could be gone for a month, just matches and a tea pail, and he would survive, no problem because he knew the environment. He knew how the animals worked, how the animals moved and he knew where to get them, but when he would go to work somewhere, then the drinking would start right away. When he went to work, to work for a boss, then he would drink, because he was not in control.

With a lot of the drugs now, the kids have no hope, nothing. There is a lot of sexual abuse, but because it has been done to them, they do not know any different. I remember when I was growing up; the sexual thing was very, very strong. I remember this one time a lady talked about some girls tied up with big thongs on their legs on the bed so that they would not be in sexual contact with anybody that came in. I thought that was crazy; I thought that it had to be some kind of a joke. But it was true; that is how it was. Even as a boy, I can remember the old people of that time talking about the old people now. Their relationship was very strong and very protective toward one another. Wherever we went, we had relatives, and their relationships with my mother and my father were very strong. There were always hugs, kisses, and gifts. They would fight over feeding us, and we were always welcome anywhere we went when I was small. That started to diminish as I got older. It became less and less. Things changed because the control was taken away.

The next generation, my children's generation, they did not see the loving community. It became violence. That is the thing now.

Up until the early 1950s, the community looked down on anybody that drank. I remember my dad coming back to the trap line with everything: all our gifts, turkey, and what not for Christmas. Then he came back with some kind of beer, wine, and whiskey. The community looked down upon us because my father had alcohol. In other places where other families had alcohol, the community talked about them. It was not right. Then more people began experimenting, and that is when the trapping and those things started to go down. Less and less people went out trapping. By 1958 to 1960, very few people went fishing or to the trap line, the control things that they knew about. The drinking reached its highest point when they stayed in town. Through the 1960s they were no longer in control of what they once had.

There were not that many jobs in Sandy Bay. There were jobs for those that worked for the power line. In Island Falls,[325] they build a dam. The community of Sandy Bay was formed without the people's consent because of the dam, but there were always people there. My grandfather was always trapping around that area. There had been a trading post[326] there. When the dam came to be in Island Falls, some people from Sandy Bay worked to build it. At the beginning, they used a lot of men to build the dam and the community of Island Falls. Later, the maintenance of the plant was left mostly to non-Natives.

Island Falls was a non-Native community. They had running water, electricity, their own recreational centre. The company provided them with a skating rink, a golf course, and a swimming pool.[327] The power came in the influenced us. Second, HA left the trap line, where his whole world was the environment: he was a good trapper, a good hunter, a good fisherman; he was really good with the environment. Then he was placed in a strange place, Sandy Bay, to be in contact with people he did not know but that he had to learn about and that created a lot of his anger.[316] Third, he married a non-Native woman, and her views are different in things. I would imagine that she wanted more than a Native woman. She never said that she did, but I would imagine that she did. People, if they grow up in a nice home with all this money and vehicles, are going to want something like that. I have never heard of this from her, but that is what I have seen in others. HA could not keep up to what he may have thought WA wanted. Maybe she did not say anything, maybe he just thought, so he became bitter in the strange kind of environment that he was in. He would go to work every day, that made him drink and that made him bitter. He did not see any hope in the future so he did not have anything, so that was the reason why I think he drank. Fourth, WA was very strong minded. I would say they were equal when it came to headstrong, so when they would clash, then the beast knocked down the beauty. If he could not shut her up with his mouth, then whack, "You shut up." I did not see that, but that is what caused it, I think,

Then he started to change and his children were starting to grow. She did not get her education until after the kids started getting big. Then she went back to school and she started to know her talents. She had those talents all the time, but I believe personally, that WA did not have any self-confidence, whatsoever. Her confidence was shot for whatever reason. I found her mother was very nice; I found her father was very nice, but I suppose there were other things. Maybe it was in school, I do not know. I never went to school with her, but when I met her, she was trying to be something I do not think that she was. When people are trying to have self-confidence but they have no self-confidence, some of them are very loud, or very aggressive, or very wanting to be involved in everything. That is how WA was when I met her. Then HA was just loud and very demanding. I imagine that sometimes WA would not meet some of his demands, and 'whack, whack,' that was his way. When their children started growing, the drinking started getting less. Then a different thing happened with HA. He started going to meetings then started to learn about how to deal with different things. He found that he had a gift for the gab and that he could deal with almost anybody that he wanted in a meeting situation, whether it would be for trapping, or for fishing, or for other community politics. He started having self-confidence, and the drinking started going down.

I am going to go back to Native people for a while. A lot of the violence comes because people do not see any future. Then when there is a lot of influence from the church, everything that the church talks about is a sin. Their message is that you are suffering because you sinned. When there is no hope, we have a lot of suicides. People are looking for answers all over, doing counselling all over, but that is not the only solution. If someone does not have a goal and does not see the future, then they have nothing. I understand that. When we first got married, I went through that, because I only got low-paying labour jobs. The first Christmas, I could not even pay for our rent because I was sick and the job that I was doing did not pay enough. There was no hope. I loved my wife and I loved our first child. She was pregnant, there were times when there was no hope, and I got angry at society. Everywhere the society was rich. Here I am, supposedly on my land through the treaties, and I have nothing. I got very, very angry so I thought of violence toward society at that point. I did not plan anything, but what overcame that thought was my love for my wife and children. This is what I would imagine that HA went through until he found something different for himself. When HA was at the trap line, he knew how to survive. It did not matter what, he could go out with just a little pail and matches, and he could survive for a month or so. He could not do it in the city or in Sandy Bay, or with people. That is why people changed in Sandy Bay. Then there was WA , when she went back to school her confidence went up. She knew how to deal with things.

I started at the university[317] in 1972. One day, I was tired of reading and Sandy Bay, Saskatchewan came on the TV. I turned up the volume on the TV and listened to the news story. The story was that this was the first time that the RCMP[318] in Prince Albert[319] had put 45 people into an 18 by 18 foot jail cell. They shoved the people into that tiny place with one slop pail and all that night those people were standing up. It may sound difficult to do that, but I guess the RCMP were tired of these people going around and always carrying things to sell to drink. The RCMP got tired of the drinking and the violence. So they just waited on the road, and when somebody come staggering, they put them into jail. The people of Sandy Bay got angry, and in a community effort, got the RCMP out of Sandy Bay.

That was the bottom for the community. I got very upset when I saw the news report, but a couple of years later I saw the change in the community and knew the cause of that change. The people in Sandy Bay had a cause, something to fight for. They opened their eyes to what was happening. A lot of those people were really up there in the drinking, and they became the leaders. I saw some of my relatives being interviewed on national TV; they were screaming. I am glad that happened because the community of Sandy Bay changed. The RCMP were booted out of Sandy Bay, the alcohol centre was built. Local people became counsellors; they became the workers at that centre. Everybody was bringing clients from different communities to come to the alcohol centre. Next, the community built a house where women or children could be sheltered if there was violence in the home. When the community achieved their goals, then they did not have a cause anymore and the community started going down again. After a while, the people in the community started fighting amongst themselves.

Now it is starting again, but this time in drugs. It is not that bad yet; you cannot see it on the road. Before, when it was bad and I used to come, people used to carry their stuff to go and sell. You could see it on the road. I was part of that while I was still in Sandy Bay and before I met my wife. I was making what they call, *molly*[320], malt beer. Everybody made that to sell and to party. Everybody made malt milk, malt brew. I made that, and I drank that too. It got to the point that it was a race. I remember at times when I drank my stuff it was still warm, still foaming. We would set it up Wednesday night, and on Friday after work, we would start drinking it. There were a lot of places that were like that. I was part of that, for a little while, about a year. Then I moved away; I did not want to be in that. I started looking for a better life. I moved to Winnipeg where I was going to try and get into music. It never did materialise because I gained for a while, but I ended up drinking. Because of society, I felt

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[323] The Downtown Eastside Enquirer, a newspaper in Vancouver, recently reported that the current Director of Carnegie Centre earns $104,000 per year, $18,000 less per year than the mayor of Vancouver (Retrieved February 28, 2007 from http:// downtowneastsideenquirer.blogspot.com/search/label/Ethel%20Whitty). The Carnegie Centre provides a The Carnegie Centre provides a range of social, recreational and educational programs for the residents of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (Retrieved February 28, 2007 from http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/ CARNAGIECENTRE/).

[324] Quiah is a Cree word that means, 'It is okay.'

[325] The Island Falls power plant was built between 1928 and 1930 to provide electricity for the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting (HBM&S) mining operation in Flin Flon. It was established within the traditional hunting territory of Cree families whose homelands had been along the Churchill River. During construction in 1929-30, these First Nations people were drawn to the employment opportunities at Island Falls. The sister community of Sandy Bay was built to house the First Nations people who were working in Island Falls. Later, a school was built for the children whose parents were residing in Sandy Bay and for those children living on trap lines in north-eastern Saskatchewan. Parents were given the option of either moving to the village of Sandy Bay so that their children could live at home while going to school, or to have their children taken from them to attend a residential school.

[326] The community of Sandy Bay was built near the site of Sturgeon House, once occupied by early fur traders between 1799 and 1801 (Rutherford, 2006).

[327] The residents of Sandy Bay were not welcome at any of the Island falls facilities.

[328] Batoche is a historic Saskatchewan community, now the site of a national historic park, located approximately five kilometres east of Duck Lake, and 65 kilometres south of Prince Albert on Highways 2 and 11 (AAA Manitoba Saskatchewan map, 1998).

[329] Reed (1897) reports, "The year just passed has shown the Department that the Sundance has become an Indian ceremony almost, if not quite, of the past. For a long time the department's policy has been in the direction of suppressing it by moral suasion, and step by step, it has been robbed of its revolting ceremonies, so that in the end, it has afforded little attraction to a great proportion of the Indian population. So long as it has remained a prominent performance, so long did it keep burning those superstitions which it was sought to eradicate" (p. xxxii).

[330] Sitting Bull was a legendary Lakota Chief born in South Dakota in 1831 who defended the Black Hills of the Dakota Territory, a site sacred to many Native people as confirmed by the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. Gold was discovered in the Black Hills subsequent to the treaty, however, and it was set aside when the commissioner of Indian Affairs decreed that all Lakota not

settled on reservations by January 1876 would be considered hostile. In June 1876, Sitting Bull led the Lakota into the Battle of the Little Bighorn River where the Seventh Cavalry was destroyed and General Custer was killed. More cavalry troops followed, and instead of surrendering, Sitting Bull led his band north into Canada. He returned in 1881 and surrendered. He died in 1890 of a gunshot fired by a Lakota police officer (PBS, 2001).

Appendix F: SA's (Sister's) Story

The very first time that I experienced the violence in HA and WA's home, SNA was about two years old. My oldest boy still remembers it. We had come to visit. When we got there, my HA was not home, just WA and SNA. We were talking and laughing when all of a sudden HA came charging in. He did not see us when he entered the room. All of a sudden, he came and just ploughed WA right in the face. There was blood flying all over. I went and I jumped in between them, and I started screaming, "Stop it! Stop it!" The look on HA's face told me that he had not known we were there. Then BA came and tried to pull HA away. With our kids there, it just infuriated HA more. WA ran out into a fenced in area and then could not get out. HA was trying to get in there. I was hanging on to the gate for dear life, and he was swinging both of us around. But I was not going to let him hit her. The kids were screaming and crying. Our kids had never seen this happen before. And to think that just before that we were all sitting around just laughing and enjoying ourselves. We had been there for half an hour, or maybe one hour when all of this happened.

I still feel affected by that violent time because of the many times I intervened between my mom and my dad. This was just something that I did automatically, without thinking. I was trying to protect WA as well. After that, my husband did not want to take us where HA was drinking, and our kids were very scared of their uncle after that. HA played on that; he did things that they were not used to. Even if he was not drinking, he would just get that barrel loudness. They would get scared and he thought it was funny to scare them. I always was at arms-length with him. I knew other things were happening because I would see WA bruised. I saw him slap her another time, but it was not to that extent. That time he did not stick around, he took off. The neighbours phoned the police and as soon as he knew the police were there, he went out the door and sat right in the police car. The police did not even come into the house; he just walked and put himself in the police car.

We stayed away from him for about ten years. WA would come to visit us, or we would go and get her, and they would come. If HA was going up north then we would get her and SNA to come and visit. It was not until after DA was born and he was starting to try to change that we started going back there again. I insisted that they would come and visit on my terms and my turf because I never trusted him. That incident just blew me away and I never wanted to trust him again. Even though things with HA have changed, some of his habits have not changed.

One Christmas, I remember going to spend time with HA and WA. They had their little envelopes that the church had dropped off, and they were getting into a disagreement on how much they were supposed to put in there. It was lots that they were expected to put in this envelope. That was the Catholic Church, and I think that HA and WA found a different balance away from the Catholic Church. It has been very good for the both of them; at that time, that is what they needed to get them through.

I used to help them when they first started on their road. I did not take that route myself; I was not Catholic, so a lot of those things were very different for me. I am very different. BA's views on the church were quite different from mine, right from way back, and that has not changed. Like the

Creator, that has always been the same. My husband has always been a spiritual person, and we searched for something as a couple. I was Anglican while my husband was Catholic. I agreed to take catechism in order to get married in the Catholic Church. After I took the catechism, I did not go through with the confirmation.

My husband said, "Well, that is not the most important thing here. What do you want to do? Do you really want to do this, or are you doing this for the church? Are you just doing it because you have to do it?"

I told him, "Yes, that is what I feel like."

My husband said, "Well, do it when you are ready." Those were different views, just like that little argument that I witnessed over how much money should be put into the church collection plate. HA felt that they should have put more money in, while WA did not think that. They had their foster daughter and all those other kids that they were looking after. WA figured that what she put in there was sufficient and that they needed their money to look after the kids and to get groceries.

He figured, "Well, the priest expects more and we should be putting more in." His views were very different from how our family, my husband and I, would think about things.

Going back to the community, the church does not have the same influence, not since that priest[331] passed on. One priest really had a strong influence over the community. In some ways, however, when you really talked to him, he could be liberal, but not to his parishioners. In the community, he had the rules and acts, but for outsiders he was more human. He needed to set an example for the people in Sandy Bay.

I met HA shortly after I met my husband. My husband's family never ended up getting to our wedding because they got drunk instead. At the time, I did not know him and I did not know his brothers, but my husband was so disappointed that we did not have any of his family at our wedding. Then, after I met them when they were drinking, I was glad they had not shown up. But at the time, I was disappointed because my husband was disappointed.

I grew up in a home where my father was very violent to us: physically, verbally, and emotionally. I learned there that a woman was a possession of her husband, so it took me a few years to believe that my husband was not going to be violent with me. After I got to know him, however, I realised he was not going to be violent with me. I always had an uneasy feeling when I first met HA because he was very loud especially when he was drinking, and he reminded me of my father. Over the years, even though I was nervous around HA, I always thought that since he was brought up the same as my husband, he would behave the same way. I expected that it would be the same thing, but it was not. We have never had violence in our home, in our own marriage. That was not anything that ever happened to me. Right from the very beginning, I got along really well with WA. We hit it off, and I have always felt like we are sisters.

My brother-in-law influenced my husband in different ways, and drinking was one of them. He would belittle him and say, "Oh, you are just scared of your wife," because he would not go out and drink with the boys. There was a kind of an animosity right away between him and me, because I was taking something away from him that he had always had control over. For a few years, my husband would give him things because that was how they did things. It was not a big issue until our kids started getting bigger and we needed more things for them. Then with me encouraging my husband, it stopped and created animosity between my husband, myself, and HA.

My husband and I were trying to live without alcohol. We both saw how it affected our lives with our families, so when we came together we tried to change our lives and the lives of our children. We did not always succeed, but we tried. Later, my brother–in-law started on a better journey, but I still have a little reservation about him in the back of my mind. It is not going to go away; it has not gone away in thirty-eight years. Right now, talking about the violent incident, I feel queasiness is in my stomach. I saw HA yesterday and I was happy to see him, but just talking about that incident, I can still feel the pain.

In my opinion, Sandy Bay has gone full circle. The very first time I went to Sandy Bay, we flew in and that was a traumatic experience in itself. I would never have been in a plane, taking off in a floatplane, and then landing on the water. HA and sister-in-law were not there at that particular time. None of my husband's family were there at that time; they were living in Flin Flon. There was no running water, and there were no phones. A lot of places did not have electricity. The first place we stayed had one bulb, as in one light socket. Then we got kicked out of there, and moved to another place. It was a small little house, with a wood stove and two electrical plugs. You could plug in things if you had anything to plug in. My husband left me there with the kids, but I did not know how to cut wood and I did not know how to make a fire. I had to carry water for the kids. I was used to always giving them a bath, and so I would have to carry water for them all the time. When we first moved there, the people in town used to call my kids the little boys with the clean faces because my kids were clean. I washed clothes by hand, because I did not even have a wash board at that time.

Everybody drank. My husband's cousin chased my kids and me once. He had a knife, and he chased us down the road. I knew only a few people that spoke English, so I went to one house. It was very hard for me in that isolated community. In my community, I knew where the safe places were to go, but when I was in Sandy Bay, I did not know people, and most people did not speak English, or if they knew it, they did not speak it to me.

There was a lot of drinking going on at that time. I finally went to see the nurse because I was upset. She said, "Well, if your husband does not get back by Monday, then I am going to have to ship you and your kids out because you are getting to a point where you are almost having a nervous breakdown." My husband came back that night. He walked in from the family camp all the way to Sandy Bay[332] because there was no road. We left the next day.

The thing that bothered me the most was that nobody spoke to me in English. I thought that they did not speak English. There was only one family that I talked with because they spoke English. When I left there, I told myself, "I am never coming back here. I do not care." Now I pick and choose who I associate with, but at that time I was so young, I did not have enough confidence to do that.

In 1971, my husband started university and in 1973, I started. I stayed home until our youngest was in kindergarten and then I went back to school. In my mind, that is what I had to do, as a woman and as a mother. I had to stay home with the kids until they were old enough. In that way, WA and I had a lot of the same ideas on things like bringing up our children.

The community of Sandy Bay changed and HA and WA were a part of that. The people in the community started changing, and then later their children started growing up and using drugs. So I feel that Sandy Bay is back almost to the same place as it was when I first went there. As an outsider, I feel that it has gone full circle.

We tried to get HA and WA's family involved with our children, so they would know their other family. But it seemed like every time we made the effort, there was always something that happened that would just scare the living daylights out of our children. So we ended up not being around them that much

There have been changes in people. A lot of people, including HA, are beginning to use Traditional Ways like the Sweat Lodge and the Sun Dance. The Traditional Ways have united me with my husband's family. I almost feel more a part of his family than mine. The Traditional Ways are something we have in common. In my opinion, there are not enough community members feeding that spiritual side, but everybody has to do that when they are ready for it.

My expectations are not being fulfilled in my head because I think HA should be a certain way from now on. To some extent, though, I went through that with the rest of his brothers, too. I had expectations of how I thought they should be, and that is just not how things are. I am so glad it was my husband that I met, and that he is the one that I ended up marrying. He is very different from the rest of them.

There was another expectation that I had of HA and sister-in-law. I figured because my husband was drinking when I met him and once I got pregnant and our son was born, he quit drinking, that HA would do the same thing in his family. That was a shot out of the water. When WA was pregnant with SNA, I was so sure that HA was going to quit drinking. It did not work out that way for a long time. Deep inside I had expectations of him that he would change once he had his children. There has not been anybody else that I know that has done that. With my brother, I expected that once his children started coming then he would quit, but that did not happen. I had a different sense of how everybody should live their lives. Because that was how my life was, I assumed that is how everybody would be. Our kids do not know it, but we have made a lot of sacrifices for them and right now they seem very unappreciative of them. Their views of how things should have been or could have been are different from ours because we made sacrifices for them when they were little. They did not understand that whatever life we gave them is just normal. It is like my expectations that people should change when they have their children. My children have lived a certain way all their lives, so it is just normal to them. They do not appreciate the sacrifices because we never told them that we had sacrificed anything for them. We did all these things, and why should we tell them? We chose that.

Our kids did not come out of this unscathed; we have some issues with addictions with our children. That was another thing. We figured that we did not do what everybody else did, so our kids should not have to do that because they did not grow up that way. We tried to shelter them and protect them from that kind of an environment but they still ended up with their own issues.

1930s. Just a mile away from Island Falls, the community of Sandy Bay housed the Native people. The people in Sandy Bay did not get power until they started talking about the welfare system in 1958. When the welfare system came in, then the power came in.

Another thing. The sewer from Island Falls, what they flushed from their bathrooms, went to the place where Sandy Bay got its drinking water. The level of the water would go up and when it would go down, you would see all the tissue paper on the willows at the place where Sandy Bay got its drinking water. The fish that we would catch and eat was watery. It was raw sewage; you would see the toilet paper wrapped in those willows all along there, whenever the water went up and then went down, just raw sewage. That is what we drank. That kind of a treatment has got to affect somebody. I do not know when they got the water plant, but I know when I left, there still was not any running water.

Then the phones came in. In 1973, when I first brought my wife to Sandy Bay, when she first met the people, I brought them down because I came to do community work. I had to leave her and the kids and go to work. There was no running water, and there was no phone. We were still getting water from the same area of the river. Most places did not have electricity. Places had wood stoves for heat. The first place we stayed had one light socket. Then we moved to another place. It was a small little house, and there were two sockets. You could plug in things if you had anything to plug in.

I was taking Community Development in University. That was what I said that I would do to try to help the community. Part of the Community Development work was field experience: having to go out with community members to different meetings. It was an excellent course, but my wife and children were not prepared for life in Sandy Bay.

At that time, 1973, the road was up to my brother's camp, because when I came back from my fieldwork in Batoche,[328] I parked there, right on the hill where my brother's camp is, my car was facing towards Sandy Bay. It was starting to rain, and the car was starting to sink. I could not drive any further, so this other guy and I left the car there and we walked into Sandy Bay.

The reason that a lot of people are going through what they go through is because the way that we did things and the traditional way that we worshipped was taken away from us. Until recently, our ceremonies were outlawed because the churches wanted control, so they influenced the government to outlaw everything from our way of worshipping.[329] At the Catholic residential schools and in the Anglican churches, they stressed that the traditional way of worship was devil worship. When I first became involved in the traditional way, even my own community called me the devil worshipper. It is my belief. I believe there is a Higher Power, and I believe that everybody has their own, and this works for me. I always believed in that, but I did not know where to search for it.

At one time, I did not know what an Indian was. Until I was in my late teens, or early twenties, there would be Indian movies, showing Sitting Bull[330] and Indians attacking wagon trains. I remember in Sandy Bay, at the movies, whenever the Indians would attack a wagon train; the cavalry would come and kill the Indians. Everybody would be clapping and cheering and laughing at these Indians being shot down. I always believed that Indians were very violent, very unstable, and murderous. Then I would hear the term, Indian, when I started going out, even in Flin Flon. "Watch out for those Indians!" I thought they were the murderous people I had seen in the movies. But these were my own people, even my relatives. I was not an Indian; I was just a human being. The Indians I knew about were violent killers. That is what I believed. One time, somebody told me that I was an Indian, and I got very, very upset. I was not like that. I denied being an Indian. I denied being an Indian until I was about twenty-six or twenty-seven, even after I met my wife. I tried to deny I was an Indian because I did not want to be a part of the losers. I did not want to be a part of those violent people.

The traditions are not anything spectacular that I feel, but they have got to do with myself. Everything that I do is within myself, how to monitor myself, how to take care of myself, which I have a hard time doing. Even how I deal with people, it is with me, and it is always the positive that way. Always stress the positive!

My dad passed away in 1987, and then my mother drank very, very heavily. She quit drinking two or three years later; it must have been around 1990 when she quit drinking, when she became totally blind. She was forced to quit drinking; she became totally blind because she was diabetic and still drank. My younger brother did a lot of work on her in the traditional way, and she started getting her eyesight back. She is very hard of hearing, and she does not want to wear a hearing aid. But same here, I am hard of hearing, so I have no room to talk.

Sometimes I feel that churches and the government took advantage of us. Why else would we only get four dollars a year for the use of the land, the treaty? Because that is what people are getting in annual treaties. Yet, when the people are celebrating treaties, we do not say that we are only getting four, five dollars a year in annual treaties. How can you celebrate something that took away your whole livelihood? All the land was taken away, your whole livelihood was taken away, how could you celebrate? I do not celebrate treaties, I do not want to. That was the worst time in my history, in the history of my people, when the treaties took away our land and our livelihood. That is how I look at it. I really believe that the only way people are going to get out is through training so that they can be part of something.

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[316] Windsor and McVey (2005) note that First Nations people tend to have stronger spiritual and emotional connections to home places. For First Nations people, loss of place, especially involuntary loss of place, attacks identity and can even cause physical and mental health problems (p. 147).

[317] BUNTEP (Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program) is a program at Brandon University.

[318] Royal Canadian Mounted Police

[319] Saskatchewan's gateway to the north, Prince Albert is a small city in north central Saskatchewan approximately 460 kilometres southwest of Sandy Bay (AAA, Manitoba Saskatchewan map, 1998).

[320] "Molly," malt beer, malt milk, and malt brew are colloquial terms used to describe a homemade fermented alcoholic beverage.

[321] In 2000, the median income of Aboriginal individuals was $13,593, up from $12,010 in 1995. In comparison, the non-Aboriginal population had a median income of $22,431, up from $20,844 (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, 2004).

[322] In 2003/2004, Aboriginal people represented a little more than two and one-half percent of the total population of Canada. In the same year, Aboriginal people accounted for between 18 and 21 % of all admissions to territorial, provincial, and federal custody. In Saskatchewan, 80 % of the people admitted to custody were Aboriginal (Brzozowski et. al., 2006).

for me!" They would have to cook for him. Those were the worst times, when they were drinking and came around. They probably thought they were having a good time but from what I gathered it was not very good for anybody.

The first time that I actually witnessed any violence was when they were living in Creighton. One time in about 1970 or 1971, I was visiting WA . Their son was just a baby, maybe a year old. HA came into town. He was drinking; it was in the afternoon, and HA went on a rampage, just ballistic. He was beating on WA. I think he hit her with a frying pan; it was not a pleasant sight. The cops were called; he was hauled away, and WA was hurt.

Shortly after that, she went to Winnipeg and I did not see much of her until about four or five years later when I went there to visit. She had left him; she got a little apartment and started going to school. She wanted to be a nurse or something. When I went there, HA was there too, and he was drinking. I did not see much violence there because I did not hang around too much, but I knew that there were a lot of things going on. Then, he sobered up through a program in Sandy Bay and he came back to Winnipeg, and somehow convinced her to move back to Sandy Bay with him. She did, and everything was fine for a while when he was on the wagon.[336] Then he went for a tumble,[337] and when that happened, WA decided to move again.

This time she moved to Saskatoon. It was about 1981; their son was about ten or eleven and their daughter was about six. HA was helping her move because at that time WA did not have her license; she could not drive herself. My two older brothers were drinking and already half-snapped.[338] WA got tired of waiting so she hopped in the truck and took off down the highway. When HA heard what had happened, he got someone to chase her down. I went for the ride and we caught up with her. HA just went ballistic. He pulled her over, got out of the truck, went to the driver's side of the truck, and started pounding on her. Then he threw her out of driver's side, into the passenger's side, and off they went. They all took off to Saskatoon, my older brother, another brother, WA and their daughter. I think that was the last episode of violence that I witnessed.

With respect to the violence, I remember hearing stories about my father and how rough he was with my mom when he was younger. I guess he would beat on her, so I think HA was just reliving what he experienced as a child. Maybe he thought that was a proper way to treat a woman, especially your spouse. That was the way that he was trained, that was what he saw, and that was what he believed was the proper way to treat your wife.

I saw violence in my father when I was a kid. When they got into the booze, my dad would beat on my mom. I remember this one time, we were living in this log cabin, and I remember that my parents had partied. They had made homebrew out of potato skins, just makeshift booze like what prisoners make in their jail cells. I remember that it took them a whole day to prepare this thing. They let it sit for a few days and then they got into drinking it. Things were fine for the first few hours, then when the booze kicked in, my dad went somewhere. My mom and her friend came back to the house. There was nobody home. I was there by myself.

Two things stick out that time. One thing was that it was the first time that I tried to make eggs for myself, and I could not understand why the eggs burned every time I put them in the frying pan. I had a fire going and I remember watching and remembering what my mom did when she fried eggs.

She lit a fire, she put the frying pan on the stove, and then she put the eggs in the pan; but I missed the lard part! I ruined about two dozen eggs. That is one thing that I remember.

The other thing I remember was that toward evening, my mom came home with her friend. They had hid the malt, they called it home brew, up in the attic. They wanted me to go up there and retrieve that booze, but I was scared because if my dad came back, I would be in trouble. They convinced me to go up there and to retrieve the booze but when I was up there bringing the booze down, my dad walked in. I was caught up there, dangling there, and I would not let go. My dad was telling me, "Let go!"

I was saying, "No." I was just hanging on to this piece of board up there.

He said, "Come down!"

I said, "No, I am not going to come down because you are going to hurt me!"

He said, "No, no, I will not hurt you." I do not know how long I stayed up there before finally I came down. They drank and I went to sleep.

All of a sudden in the middle of the night, I woke up and my sisters were screaming. I asked, "What is going on?" We snuck out of the house, and my mom managed to get away from my dad so we hid in this cherry bush not far from the house. It was thick in that bush. We were all huddled there, and my dad was tearing up the house, and he was throwing everything out. Everything. The sun came up, and he passed out so we came out. Everything that had been in the house was scattered on the front lawn.

My mom's mom died when she was twelve. Somebody was saying that her mom was very abused by the guy that she had married. They told me that she was beaten to death by this guy. When my mom was drunk she would say, "He was a bastard. He killed my mom and my baby brother." I believed her.

Then somebody else told me, "No, it was not the way it was. He really treated her good!" The way that she died was that she got cold. They were visiting from one village to the other, and she was riding in the sleigh in the winter, and then she got a chill. Because she was pregnant, it killed her. Her stepfather was married from before and had kids of his own. They verbally abused my mom. That is the story that I got. So I do not know what the real story was but regardless of that I know she was not treated very well in that family because she was physically and verbally abused by the rest of the kids.

With my parents, the violence was never sober violence. When they were drunk, my dad was the aggressive one. He let out all his frustrations when he was drunk. When they were sober, Mom was the one that was aggressive. She verbally abused my dad.

My mom was verbally abusive to anyone and everyone. Then there were my uncles and my aunts. My mom used to talk about this lady all the time, but I did not know that it was my dad's sister. She knew who I was and she was always happy to see me. She would want to give me a hug but I would run away from her. It was the same with my other aunts. For example, when I was growing up in Sandy Bay, my dad had two brothers and two sisters as well as uncles and aunts that lived in town. I did not know that I was related to those people because my mom would not allow them to come and visit. I did not like them even though they were always trying to be kind to me when I met them on the street. I would not accept their kindness because my mom would talk about them. She said that they were thieves, or whatever it was that she believed that they were. She would belittle people and talk behind their back. I remember sitting there as a kid and listening to her go on and on about these people, and I thinking to myself, "These people must be really bad." Then when I saw them, I did not like them; I did not give them a chance and it was all because of what my mom was talking about when I was listening. I basically closed myself off.

The way that my mom was has a lot to do with the way we have been and the way we are today. The way that my mom raised us was verbally and physically abusive, the way she was treated as a child. It all stems from her being in the residential school.[339] During the whole time that she was there, she did not have anybody to visit and to teach her parental skills. My dad was twenty-four and she was fifteen and just back from residential school when they married. She said, "Oh yeah, I had such a good time when I was at the residential school," But when we went to Sturgeon Landing[340] in 1971 to visit that place, all she did was cry when we were there. We were there for four days, she was drunk, and she was just crying and crying. What a terrible visit! Would you cry so much if you had such a good time in a place? I do not think so. She never talked about what really did happen in that place. I think that the way my mom behaved really messed me up in regards to relationships.

So growing up in that, I think that there were two ways that you could go about your own adult life. You can either adopt that behavior, or not adopt it. I decided, "No, I am not going to treat women like that. I am not going to hurt them; I am not going to be physical with them." That is the road I took, whereas HA went the other way. He was a bully and he was spoiled as a child. He was always used to getting his way. But then he was always a bully from what I remember, and from the stories I have heard from other people and the things I saw I do not think it was just women that he bullied. Anybody that he could beat on, he would beat on. I think that is just the way he was. There were a lot of things that happened to him as a child. He said the priest sexually abused him. Looking back on it, HA was always a violent person, not just toward WA , but toward everybody around him. I remember him getting violent with my father and getting violent with my mom: slapping them around. One of my brothers was his personal punching bag; he would always take his frustrations out on him and beat on him. When he was sober, he acted like nothing ever happened. Nobody would say anything when they were sober. So there were a lot of things being left unsaid, along with things not being talked about.

The way my mom and dad were, how they raised us, and what happened there affect each of us when it comes to violence. I have one older brother who is like me; he chooses not to be violent. HA was violent when he drank, and he drank a lot. He was violent with my other brother; those two were exactly the same. Then there were the passive ones: three of us were passive. One of us was borderline, either passive or physically and verbally abusive. So it seemed to be a choice: either you went this way, or you went that way. The choice was basically yours as to how you wanted to behave towards people, especially people that you cared about, be it your spouse or your children. Today, my older sister behaves the way my mom behaved. She is here, nobody goes to visit her; everybody stays away. That is the way we were in Sandy Bay. Nobody came over to our house. Today when I go see my mom, she says all the time, "Nobody cares about me; nobody comes to see me."

"But you spent the last thirty years chasing them away and telling them that they were no good."

Today, I do not know how to be a parent. If I follow the role models that I had, which were my mom and my dad, then I pity my poor kids. But that does not mean I do not love my kids, it is just that I do not know how to really relate to them. With my youngest boy, I just try my best to love him, and at the same time, to just be kind to him, to tell him things if he is doing something wrong, which he never does. But when he does, or if he is upset, I try and talk to him. If I were to treat him the way I was treated, or the way I saw my siblings being treated, I would be in prison.

I myself have been searching for love, and I have found some decent people that cared for me. But I could not give that love back. I am still pretty messed up emotionally, although I am eighteen years away from the drinking and it has been ten years since I had my last toke. Even with that, being clean and sober, I still have not come to full terms with issues within myself. But I am still working really hard. I try to be honest with myself. I still struggle with relationships. That is the last hurdle that I need to work on myself and come to understand. I am in the stage right now where I am going to be leaving the relationship that I am in because I do not know what else to do.

WA, on the other hand, was also raised in an alcoholic home, where her mom and her father were alcoholic. She is just a product of that. When you grow up in an alcoholic home there are different types of behaviors that you fall into. One of the behaviors, if you do not know any better, is to fall in love with an alcoholic. She started hanging around with HA when she was fifteen. Her parents put her in a nut house when she was a teenager. Somebody once told her it was because she was going out with an Indian. She came to Sandy Bay when she was sixteen. She had hooked up with HA in Flin Flon and when her parents got wind of that, they shipped her off to that mental institution for a little while. She was pretty messed up herself: emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. I do not believe she ever drank; I never saw her drink. I have never been around when WA actually drank. I have never known her to be a drinker. I have never seen a bottle of beer, or wine, or whiskey around her. Even when she first came to Sandy Bay, I never saw that. Maybe she hid it, but I have never seen her to drink alcohol. I think her problem was that she was a doormat. She had this ideal about marriage, and there was no place that she could run that HA could not find her. Somehow, she let him talk to her and then was led back into the trap.

From what I can remember, WA never really had any support. She had one brother, she was married all that time, and her brother died about six years ago. I never met the guy, not once. Never! I do not think that they were very close. Her dad came to visit twice that I can remember. When he was still living in Flin Flon, he drove up to Sandy Bay, but of course he was drinking. I met her mom once or twice. I am sorry to say, but I do not think WA was close to anyone. Even from the start I never remember her having any friends, or hearing of any friends of hers. There was nobody.

I do not feel sorry for her, because I think of HA as being the kind of guy that I would warn my daughter of. I would never want my daughter to end up with somebody like him. He has been lucky; there have been times where he could have killed her by accident. When he went ballistic, he was like those wrestlers who pick up somebody and smash them, just pound them. That is how I saw him treat her. She went through a lot both physically and emotionally. If I had been WA , I would have left him a long time ago.

What has changed? As for HA, I do not think he has ever really tried. There are a lot of things that he refuses to look at with himself. He tries to be spiritual but he is not honest with himself. That is what I see; for me that is the truth. That is what I know. There has got to be something for him in the end. He has never done anything for anybody just out of the goodness of his heart. It always has to have a payback of some sort.

He is still the same. He is living in his house in Sandy Bay, keeping some young guys in wine and Listerine, like his butlers or slaves. I do not think that is right when I see him hanging around with those young alcoholics. Almost all of the older alcoholics have died; the ones that he hung around with, that he paid in booze to work for him. Now they are all dead and gone and there is a new crop of them. There is always alcohol involved. I have not seen any physical violence since the last time HA drank but he switched over to being verbally abusive. He is a dry drunk. He does not drink, but he is sick, really sick. He is not so violent these days because he is old. If he could he would still do it, but I think that grandfather time has gotten his grips with him. He is still very verbally abusive, and he always was, sober or drunk. He curses and belittles WA , so she has slowly moved away from being a doormat to a point where she is finally removing herself from it. I just heard that she filed for divorce, and thought, "She should have done that twenty-five, thirty

We ended up having to really back off with our son and daughter-in-law. It is a control issue; I felt I had to have them near by so that I could keep track of everything. Right now, they are physically closer than they ever were, because their house is from here to the highway away from us, with a river in between. Last year, my son and daughter-in-law, were both using, one was drinking, while one was doing drugs. One of the hardest things I ever had to do was intervene.

I had to decide, "Okay, do I know what is happening? Where do I draw the line? When do I say, Okay people, this is enough. You are not doing this to these kids anymore." Then Child and Family Services stepped in because I called them, and my son and daughter-in-law were so good at talking their way out of things.

The kids were strong enough to say, "No, Mom and Dad, you have been doing this. We do not have a phone most of the time. We are not letting you do this anymore." If our grandchildren had not felt that strong about it, I do not think I would have had the courage to go through with it because at the beginning my husband and I were at odds about it.

The year before, my husband worked up in Pukatawagan so he did not see all the things that I saw and I did not tell him all the things because when he would be home he would be happy to see everybody. He did not want to hear about the problems. It just got pushed aside and this crisis came along, so it took him a little while to get those things straightened out. The key was not anything we did to straighten it out, it had to come from them. And the key for me was to back off. An example of how in control I was of that situation was this fall, one of the teachers came to me, and said, "Do you want to see your granddaughters' attendance?"

I said, "No."

She said, "Well, you know what? She is going to get kicked out of school, pretty soon."

I said, "Well, you know what? My granddaughter has two very capable parents. Can you talk to them?"

She said, "Oh, okay. But in the past you always…"

I said, "Yeah, but that is where I am trying to learn to take a step back, and not be the go-between where you come and show me my granddaughter's attendance, and then I go run to the parents, and say, 'Well, you should make sure your kid gets to school.'" I used to do things like that. Even with the drinking not there, still there was that control issue. We just let it get out of hand. Now I do not see them as much.

We help them but I talked to my son just before we came down here, and I talked to my other one almost the same way. I said, "You know, I have no problem with looking after my grandson for this month, and the financial part is not an issue for me. It is only going to be an issue if I find out that I am subsidising your addiction. Then it is going to be a big issue for me because I am no longer accepting that. I did that for you before, and I did that for your brother so I am giving you the same treatment that I gave him. I am telling you that I am not doing that anymore. I am not subsidising either one of you. I want to help but not in that way."

My son just looked at me, and said, "Well, I really appreciate your honesty." Previously, I had not been able to say that to him. I wanted to say it, but somehow I just did not feel I could say it over the phone.

It took a lot of courage for me to do that with my other son, because he did not take it as well as my younger son did. My other son got his back up very fast. He said, "Well, I never asked you to subsidise me."

I said, "I know you did not but I just jumped on the band wagon and wanted to do that." I work in the school. What I used to do if my grandchildren did not have lunches, I would always make sure I would bring something extra so then I would give them that extra something. Then their parents did not have to worry about it; they could spend their money on something else. The kids got used to that too.

One day, this was about Christmas, my younger granddaughter came and said, "Granny, do you have a drink?"

I said, "Well, did not your parents get you a juice? "

"Yeah, but I do not like juice!"

I said, "What?"

She said, "Well, they gave me an orange juice but I do not like it."

I said, "Well, too bad. That is what your parents provided you with, and I am sure that they are not going to appreciate me giving you a Pepsi when you have juice to drink."

"Oh, okay," she said and just walked away.

I could not have said that to her before. My answer would have been, "Okay, your parents did not give you what you want. Come to me. Granny will save you." It has been a hard thing for me, but the kids are accepting that, and the parents are accepting that. They are doing well ever since. It took a little while though, even after the kids went back, I still wanted to go save them.

Then my reasoning was, "Well, I do not want my grandchildren to suffer. I am working. I can do this. "

But it got to a point where it got out of hand, and we were just saying, "That is okay, those are just material things. Quiah[333], that is okay."

It was not okay, though because a lot of things went missing, and we just replaced them or we started not replacing things, like play stations, or movies. We would buy movies for the kids and their dad would go and pawn them then lose them, because he could not get them out of the pawnshop. Today I know that if I can just keep my nose out of their business I will be okay.

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[331] Reverend Hector Thiboutot, O.M.I was the parish priest at Sandy Bay in 1969. The school in the community is named after him (Catholic Yearbook and Ecclesiastical Directory, 1969, p. A17).

[332] The family camp consists of three sites located along Highway 135, 175 kilometres northeast of Flin Flon, and 15 kilometres southeast of Sandy Bay.

[333] Quiah is a Cree word that means, "It is okay."

Appendix G: LA's (Little Brother's) Story

WA first came into the picture in the late 1960s. She was sixteen or seventeen, just a kid herself. HA is probably ten years older than her. When she first came up to Sandy Bay in 1967 or 1968, things were good. They came, they shacked up[334] in the summer, everything was good, and then they got married. When they were in Sandy Bay, there was no violence because it was just a new relationship. They were going through the honeymoon stage, and everything was fine.

When WA lived in Creighton in the 1970s, my brothers used to roll into town at least once a year in the summer time. WA was basically a single parent at the time because HA would come and go. He was into his alcohol quite a bit and he would take off. He would go and work, I do not know where, but he spent a lot of time in those years in Lynn Lake,[335] working at the mines. Two of my older brothers hung around together a lot in those days, and that is the same even today. They would come, my two older brothers, and they always had other guys with them. They used to go around in a group, pool their money, and just drink and drink; all they did was drink. They probably had jobs, because they were always in the bush; they were working but when that finished they came back to town. When they came into town, the violence would start after the booze was gone, or when they got drunk. If HA was not beating on my older brother, he would be beating on my dad or beating on my mom, or on anybody else that was around.

When they came into town, they used to hang around for a month or two. HA would wake my sisters early in the morning and say, "Come on, cook of his drunk buddies. At that time I could not understand why she stayed. "He is going to kill you if you stay!"

The times that she did get away, he always seemed to weasel back, "I was drinking, and I am sorry." He used that excuse for a lot of years. The cycle continued, he would be okay for a while, and then he would revert back into his old behaviours.

He always seemed to be drunk, or he was so grouchy that nobody would want to be around him. When he was recovering from drinking, everybody did the eggshell walk around him. In pictures of him at Christmas, and he was just wrecked: the scariest, ugliest face, this lump on the couch, and my aunt and others smiling in the pictures.

One time he went into treatment, then came home for the weekend and said, "Do you know what? I do not know about the rest of the family, but as bad as I can get, you have always accepted me. You have not made me feel worse than how I have made myself feel. I thank you for that."

I asked, "Well, are you going to stay sober?"

He replied, "I do not know." That was in either February or March of 1979 in Saskatoon, when my aunt had gone into treatment at Calder.

The following week my uncle lost it. He went after my aunt, after me when I was pregnant, and after my partner. My partner had come to get me. We were just going to spend the weekend there and then we were going to leave. My uncle got violent with my partner, and I said, "This is it!" I told her I could not stay. I could not chance him hitting me when I was pregnant. I felt bad about leaving, but my aunt was finished her program at Calder Centre. I was going to stick around to help her out some more, but I thought, "No, I cannot chance it."

When my uncle attacked us, he was half-cut. He was not that drunk, but it was like he decided, "I can behave for so long and then no more." He brought all his buddies home. The fight was over chicken but it could have been anything. It could have been because the toilet paper was not rolled properly. He was just looking to pick a fight.

My aunt had done the program at Calder; she was fragile when she came out, and then she had to deal with that. I could not think of anybody who would have that much love, to put up with that. Now I realise that love of self that would not allow you to put up with that. She lived under his abuse for another eighteen, nineteen years. She did things like trying to make it better, moving, and supporting him. When he did something like his fishing and trapping, she would back him. If it was not for my aunt, he would not have been able to do those things. She tried to help him to be the man that she always wanted him to be: self sufficient, a good wage-earner. She tried to do for him what he needed to do for himself. He needed that support. She did not mind giving it. No matter what she did, though, he was always miserable to her. When he made the decision to sober up, he had quite a few relapses. When he did decide, I thought that would be it for being violent, for being so abusive. But when he could not physically justify hitting her any more after he got sober, he used emotional and verbal abuse: the swearing, the intimidation, and calling her down. Then there was financial abuse[342], and mental abuse[343]; he still had a pretty good handle on those.

At some point, my aunt said, "That is enough." She had given ultimatums before, but what was different was that she charged him. He did not believe that she would do that.

He decided, "I better quit this or I am going to spend time in jail and I do not want to do that." His decision to quit drinking coincided with my aunt's decision to stop accepting the abuse.

My uncle wanted to play games, but my aunt just said, "I have got kids to raise." When he realised that she was not going to put up with physical abuse anymore, he realigned himself and then he began emotionally and mentally abusing her. Then she got herself stronger and said, "I do not deserve this and I am not putting up with it anymore." She left it up to him, "I am not the only one in this relationship, so you either pull up your boot straps, and decide what is important, but otherwise, I am done." She left it up to him, she did not stop her life to wait for him anymore. She made a decision to go to school. She moved to Prince Albert, and took Business Ed at SIAST[344].

It was amazing to see her when she did leave. I thought she was going to go back, that my uncle would convince her that she could not do this or, "I want you home." I know they had fights about it, but she stuck to her guns. She did not come back to Sandy Bay.

She was getting her life on track. My uncle would come and see her; it was like he was living in both places. It has been like that ever since. My aunt continues to do what she needs to do to keep her mind, body, and soul together. She is not waiting for my uncle to get it together, or asking him to get it together. Instead it is, "In our relationship, where do we stand now?

What do you think? Do you want this to continue? What do you think you need to do?"

A couple of times, my uncle lost it on her and then said, "Well, I really want to go to counselling." He went for a while each time.

He got into the verbal abuse, the blaming and she said, "I am not taking responsibility for how you feel. I have no control over that. I only have control over me." She did not buy into the games, so when he saw her change, he started to change. That is how that worked.

There are demons that my uncle is wrestling with. I have a pretty good idea what they are, but he has not found the courage within himself to deal with them, or to commit, really commit to doing something. Many of the rest of us in the family have really committed to doing something. I am not going to lie that I was not a violent person, and that is something that I struggle with every day. I have been accused of being a bully, and of intimidating others. All of us have dealt with our violent upbringing in our own ways. The younger brothers of my uncle have found spirituality to fill that space.

I believe that there are certain things that my uncle is not willing to deal with. He is a vicarious drunk; he does not actively ingest alcohol, but he surrounds himself with people that do. It fulfils something in him. He does not need to be there; he chooses to be there. He is immersed in that environment, and then he brings that ugliness when he comes to visit my aunt here in La Ronge. I keep seeing the behaviours. He can be a good guy for a while, and then the next time you see the old game-playing behaviours.

My aunt just sticks to her guns. Her behaviour toward him is, "You have got to do what you have got to do. I am not willing to accept that ugliness when you come here. This is my home. It is a safe place, a clean place: emotionally, mentally, spiritually and physically. I want to keep it that way."

When she makes a stand like that, he brings a drunk with him, somebody who is actively drinking, maybe not drinking in her house but around her place. That affects her. That is where they are at now. We can see the behaviours that are happening with him. He does not have a safe place there, so he comes here. But it is his choice not to have a safe place because of the people that he wants to associate with.

We had many secrets in our family. We would wake up and there would be blood all over. I am just going to give an example here. There is a movie that came out about the Maori people and the violence. It was about a family and basically it could have been my family if you multiplied it by ten: the violence, the assaults, the scariness, and what I was taught at an early age. I would wake up to everything broken in the house: people bleeding on the floor and pools of blood that I had to try to walk over. I was told that it did not happen. We would be taken over to another family member's house and told that nothing happened. "You are dreaming it. Shut up! What is wrong with you? Why are you trying to make up lies?" I remember hearing that when I was about four. Another time, my mother went after one of her brothers or one of her uncles. She went after him with a hatchet, and she just about nailed him in the back. The hatchet got stuck in the doorway, and she was trying to pull it out. When she was trying to pull it out, it came out, whacked her in the head, and she fell on the floor. Everybody thought she was dead. I remember sitting there looking at her, just watching that big goose-egg on her forehead. My brother and sister were crying so I took care of them, changed their diapers, fed them, and watched her. When drunks came by I said, "No, you cannot drink here, she is out." I said, "The police are coming. There is somebody coming," so nobody would come and bother us. Then when she sobered up, she cleaned the house, and I would ask how she was feeling; "Well, there is nothing wrong with me, what are you talking about? Why do you make up such lies? You are such a story teller."

Then I would start thinking, "Well, maybe this did not happen." I could see the hole where the hatchet was, I could see the thing on her forehead, and I could see the stacks of beer bottles in the back room. But maybe it did not happen. When the family got together, we knew that there was going to be a drunk and there was going to be violence, so all us kids would take off. We had little forts that we would go. I found out that there were forts all over the place so kids would be safe when people were drinking. We would go to these forts, we would talk about what was going on inside, and a couple of times we walked in and everything was busted. We would try and sneak something to feed ourselves. We would fall asleep in those places, and one of my uncles and an older aunt would come get us. And everything would be like nothing happened. There would be big holes in the walls, there would be people with black eyes, stitches, and somebody had their arm or their wrist broken once.

They said, "Nothing happened. What is wrong with you kids? You have a place to sleep, what is wrong with you?" This was from my grandfather, this was from my mother, this was from my uncles. We could not believe what we saw, we could not believe what we heard, we were just making things up, and that was all of us. All of us kids were lying. If somebody was molesting us, we were lying. What made the molestation worse was if this person was giving drinks to the family then we were definitely lying. We were the ones that were the problem; not the person that was trying to rape us in our sleep. That is why we would sleep together because if somebody would try to come and assault us, there were enough of us to fight back. But we were lying when that happened. I think that was the hardest thing to deal with.

We grew up basically not believing adults and knowing that adults would hurt us one way or another. Part of our getting our power back was to talk to each other, to whoever would listen because none of the adults would believe us.

The biggest thing we were told was that we would get the beating of our life if we ever told a social worker, or if we said anything in school. And that we would be taken to awful places. We knew about foster homes and we were assaulted there, some of us worse then others. At least at home we knew how to protect ourselves, whereas in these places, we did not know where there was a safe place, or who was a safe person, or even where we could make a fort that was safe. I do not think a lot of the family ever spoke about it or about what caused it, when things like that happened. You just did not talk about that person anymore; they just disappeared off the map. The thing about not telling anything, "This is the truth, and tell me what your truth is." I lost a brother that way. My stepfather was a very abusive man and my mother had gotten pregnant by another man when he was in jail. I remember her getting big and leaving home, leaving Creighton where everybody was living at the time. My uncles and my aunts and my grandmother and grandfather did not know that she was knocked up again. We moved to Prince Albert. I remember her being pregnant, and I knew enough that a baby was coming. Then my mom was gone for three days and she came back with no baby.

She said, "What are you talking about, why do you lie?" I knew that I had a little brother and right up to ten years before she died, she tried to deny it. I said, "I know who he is. I know who his father is."

Eventually my mom 'fessed' up. It was when he called, when my brother called about his treaty rights. My uncle got the call in Sandy Bay when he was the mayor or something there, at the time.

He said, "Well, you were right."

I said, "Yeah, it is too bad that you guys could not catch up on what I was telling you." That happened right up until the time when my brother met with my mother. And I said, "This is a full-grown man. He has been my brother since I was a little itty-bitty. Still, if you said it was not true, then it was not true. The truth could be standing right in front of you, but it was not the truth, it was something else.

My mom had about ten minutes with him, then he said, "I am out of here." I do not blame him. After that he came back here for a bit and then he took off and we have not seen him since. I sent a message to his adopted father when my mom died, but we never heard anything.

Traditional spirituality has helped many in our family. They took the violent behaviour out, and committed to something to improve their situation so they could help others. My uncle has the same gifts, but he chooses not to pick them up for whatever reason. Spirituality is the one thing that has worked for us, it has helped us deal with that negativity, because I believe that every violent act that we have committed leaves a mark on us somewhere.

My sisters, some of my cousins, and I figured that when the drinking stopped and when people were getting sober that life would be better. We found out in the first couple of years that that was not so. There were some, like me, that went into

treatment into Calder Centre for the Co-dependency Course[345]. We realised that we really did not have anything to do with the alcoholism, that our addiction was secondary. The alcoholic is the primary victim of the addiction while the secondary victims are the spouse, children and relatives of the alcoholic. Calder helped us put a name to what we already knew. It was like, "Okay, this is got to be true because I know this already, and they are telling me what I already figured out on my own."

The hardest thing for our family was when we were right in the thickest of our sickness, people would wolf-pack[346] you if you did not agree with them. If somebody was going out of the so-called normal or what everybody believed in, then they would just gang up on you and tear you to shreds. If you tried to move out of the sickness and into healing, you got pulled back by the whole family. Then, a few more people, my sisters and a couple of cousins, decided that this was not the way we were going to live anymore. We made a promise, an unsaid promise that we were not going to do that to our families. We had seen how bad it was and even though all of us battled our own alcoholism, it took us a shorter time to get right down to the bottom of the bottom. Some of them drank hard for thirty-five years. It took me five years from beginning to end and after that, what did I have to show for it? I was a drug addict, I was a relationship addict, and I was an alcoholic. By then my uncle and aunt were already sober. I do not remember them saying, "Hey my girl, what are you doing to yourself?" They just said, "Well, it is your path, and you are going on it, but we are not going to support you in it."

At first, I was resentful, "Uncle! You stole from us, you threatened us when you were using, now I want to go out and drink. Help me up." Later, I finally realised that after I quit my drinking, the slate was not going to be clean. Being sober and without drugs, it was like you could see all the ugliness. Then the question was, "How do you stop that ugliness from continuing?" I concentrated on my family.

Then I realised that the decisions that I had made in relationships were wrapped around using, so when I stopped using I did not know how to have a relationship because that was what brought us together. So then I thought, "Well, if I want somebody sober, then a treatment worker would be okay." I went out with three sober people: one was a director of an in-patient treatment centre, one was a NADAP[347] worker for fifteen years, and another one was a drug addictions counsellor. They were the sickest men that I have ever gone out with. I thought that if they were solid and in sobriety, then it would be different. It was not. I saw in them all the sick behaviours that I saw in the relationships in my family: all the game playing, them having you doubt your own reality, them telling you what your truth was. I started concentrating on myself, and then I realised how similar the behaviours of my aunts, my cousins, my uncles, and my grandparents were. My grandma, my grandpa, their fights, and how they fought were the same as how my aunts and uncles fought. That was the same as how my cousins fought with their men and years ago." I am glad she is divorcing him; I think she missed out on having a decent life, a happy life. She is still pretty messed up herself because she is still in the merry-go-round. She filed for divorce but I do not know what good that is going to do because it is just paper. She still has got to cut those strings. What really matters is how you resolve this kind of thing. You need closure. Maybe her life will be better for her if she is alone. I hope she finds somebody that will love her, because I do not see that as love, what they had together.

What has changed is the kind of work WA does. She is working with addictions. She is learning more about herself, especially in the last ten years. I think she has come a long way. I think that has a lot to do with the job, the type of job that she is doing. I think she was in denial, real severe denial as to what was really happening in her life. Then by taking training, and working with addicted people, she is finally seeing what is happening in her own life. It finally just went, 'ping'[341] for her.

Their son has been around and saw all the things that happened, yet he is not a violent person. As big as he is, I have never seen him get violent toward anybody. He is an intelligent man, he does not drink or do drugs, but he pushes himself to the limit. He does not have a job, but he works just as hard trying to achieve in his singing career. With the brains and the knowledge he has, he could have been a millionaire five times over. He is a smart man, if he put his mind to something, if money was what he was after, that guy would have made millions by the time he was twenty if he wanted to. He is doing what he loves with his singing, but there is no payback. I do not know about their daughter because I have never had any real contact with her.

I have heard stories about other people in my family. My grandpa's wife went crazy. The story goes that my grandpa was gentle, and he was kind. When he went out trapping she would not go with him to the trap line. She was Métis, she had light colored skin and my mom says that she was a very pretty woman. When my grandpa went out on the trap line, she would be running around with all the guys in town. Then something happened and she went nuts. She confessed all her deeds on her dying bed to my grandpa. My aunt was there, my grandpa's sister. My grandpa put his hand over her mouth; he did not want to hear. She went on and on, and then she died. That is when he started drinking really heavy. Then he hooked up with this other woman, and just drank, and drank, and drank, and drank. Eventually, he died quite young. He was only about fifty-four when he died. The alcohol killed him.

Another one of my uncles died an alcohol related death. He went to a party and got beat up. Then he was walking to the hospital, and while he was just outside the hospital, he got hit. Then they took him into the hospital, and a few days later he had a massive heart attack and died. That tells me that when the Creator wants you, you are not escaping!

The problems and dysfunction that still plaque my family seem to have come honestly, when you look at the difficulties, and the problems, and the dysfunction that was everywhere.

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[334] Shacked up is a colloquial term that means living together in a sexual relationship without being married.

[335] Lynn Lake is a community in Manitoba situated approximately 115 kilometres north of Pukatawagan (AAA Manitoba Saskatchewan Map, 1998).

[336] "On the wagon" is a colloquial term that originated as "on the water wagon." It means abstaining from drinking alcohol.

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[337] "Went for a tumble" means to "fall off the wagon," or to begin drinking alcohol after having been abstinent from it.

[338] Partially drunk

[339] Barton, Thommasen, Tallio, Zhang, and Michalos (2005) stated that the residential school experience has affected Aboriginal peoples in destructive ways and continues to have a drastic impact on families. The practice of separating children from their parents has resulted in suffering related to the loss of family structure, cohesion, and quality of family life (p. 296).

[340] Located near the northeast tip of Namew Lake, Sturgeon Landing is a tiny community of 66 people. This was the site of the residential school (Retrieved from http://broadband.gc.ca/demographc_servlet/community_demographics/4789).

[341] She developed a sudden understanding of the situation.

Appendix H: NA's (Niece's) Story

What I remember about my uncle is that he was always violent. My first recollection of HA was when my stepfather and he were fighting in the house. My stepfather attacked him with a rake after they had had an argument. They had the fight outside, and then they brought it in the house. My sister was a baby; my uncle threw my stepfather on the playpen that my sister was in. If it were not for WA, my aunt, grabbing her, she probably would have died. People were screaming and it was bloody.

Anytime that I had any interaction growing up with my uncle, it was always bloody and violent and I just watched my aunt deteriorate. I watched her wanting to make a life for her two children. We, as children, would rally to her and we would try to protect her, but my uncle got violent with us too. He would pick on her more or we would not be allowed to go there but we would go anyway. I remember my aunt, sometimes saying, "Well, you kids should go," and I knew that something was going to happen. Then we realised that we were making things worse for my aunt, so we would just back off. My aunt raised everybody. She raised my siblings, her biological kids, and me and then foster kids and cousins, younger sister and brother-in-laws. My aunt was always protective of her kids. She tried to act like nothing was happening but as the violence escalated her son and daughter became more witness to it.

I remember that my aunt had bruises. She was so pale; you could just see where on her arms he had got a hold of her with the black and blue marks. A couple of times, I saw him punch her. He punched her like he punched one

For me, when I sobered up, I realised that I was only a couple of years older than my kids were. I had to raise me first so that when they came to that stage in life, I would be able to help them go through it. I would not have been able to do that if I had not been off alcohol and drugs, or if I needed to be in sick relationships.

I realised that there are people in my family that have the emotional maturity of five-year-olds. Others have the mentality or the reasoning skill level of ten or eleven-year-olds with temper tantrums just short of, "I am going to hold my breath if I do not get my own way." That was when I realised that healing comes in stages, that everybody is at whatever stage that they have worked on, and that it takes courage to be able to do it. It took a lot of courage for me to quit drinking.

I am not sure what people would say is a lot of drinking but I seem to remember that we would be the last ones sitting, and we would be waiting for these wusses[349] to get up and drink with us again. People would be passed out for hours, and we would still be at it. One time, either on James Smith[350] or Muskoday[351], there were about thirteen or fourteen vehicles, we were partying at somebody's house, and then everybody passed out. I got in a vehicle and drank a twelve[352] waiting for someone to get up. No one got up so I had some liquor in my bag and I went to find another party. We did drink a lot.

I did not drink to have a good time; I drank just to have everything fade: memories fade, and worries fade. There was no such thing in my family as a happy drunk. We were violent people whether or not we had alcohol in us. We were just very, very, angry, angry, angry people. That anger basically ate us up inside and that is why we drank more, and drank more, and drank more to try and stop it from eating us from the inside out.

I have a lot of family members that have died of cancer. What I understand of cancer, what Traditional teachings have taught me now, is that cancer is anger turned in on yourself; it eats you alive from the inside out. I have quite a few relatives in the Sandy Bay graveyard that were eaten alive from the inside out.

People knew that we were drunks, and then people saw us sober up. Their reaction was that first we were no good and then later we were too good to hang around with or to talk to, which was not true. It was just that we realised that we were killing ourselves and for a few of us, we are still doing that because we have not done the work that we need to do in order to move on and to grow.

For myself in the relationship, man-woman stuff, I can be friends with men and I can speak to men very well but when it comes to an emotional level, I just have to block it out because I do not have that trust there. There are only about three or four men in this planet that have earned my trust. Two of them are my uncles, and two of them are my Traditional teachers.

I have such hope that when we quit the drinking, when we quit the abuse, the next step is that we will gather all that we have positive in us, and work on healing all that crap that we created when we drank. The twelve-step program[353] has worked for a lot of people and it has worked for some of our family members but it did not click with some of us so we went the way of the Traditions. I found that the way of the Traditions was harder than the twelve-steps because not only did you belong to a group that supported you, but they also called you on a lot of stuff. They would say, "I see you hurting yourself and I want you to stop it because I love that person there. I care about what happens to that woman, or I care about what happens to that man, so now you stop hurting my friend."

The reaction was, "You are talking about me."

"I am not talking to you; I am talking to your spirit."

That is what the biggest difference has been: even as ugly and as unkind as we have been, people accepted us for who we were at that moment in time. They would not be judgmental. I knew that not all Traditional people were that way. I knew a lot of Traditional people that could be very judgmental, but there was a middle ground for that.

There are been times that I have actually gone and sat in the bar and just wanted to say, "Forget it," I was in so much pain. Then I sat there, and it was almost like people see on Disney's little Jiminee Cricket, a little voice that said, "Do you really want to do this?" I had the glass, and then the voice said a little louder, "Do you really want to do this?"

My answer was, "No."

The people sitting with me said, "What is wrong with you?"

I said, "I cannot stay here, I have to go." How disappointed they were because I just about went back to where they were! Those people have never bothered me again, because that is the last time that I was so low that I almost picked up a drink.

I have seen a lot of changes, not so much with the older people because they are dying off, they are just leaving us so fast. People, my uncle's and my aunt's age[354], are struggling. They have had certain number of layers removed, like old paint removed. They are feeling vulnerable, like they cannot hide behind the booze and say, "This is what is causing me to be this way." They are not willing right now to own up to the ugliness and the meanness that is a part of them. It is so scary to be truthful: to be truthful to yourself and to the people that love you. The generation of the forty-year-olds and younger are pulling it together. They are finding their ways; some people have chosen Christianity. Some people have chosen Catholicism. Some have gone on a spiritual path but all of us are doing something that is feeding our spirit. It is spirit enhancing. When your spirit is enhanced, you learn ways to heal your mind and your body.

For me, the hardest thing to heal from is the violence. My home, I have told my kids, is a safe place. I want it to be a safe place for me and others that come here. When I have helped family members like my younger sisters with their families, they would send their kids here for me to fix them. I realised that is foolish but I let them stay with me while they try to figure out where they needed to go. I told them, "You are here and you think there is a miracle that is going to happen. Well, it is not going to happen unless you make it happen."

The last time that my nephew and my niece were here, they had a brawl; they had a fight on my landing here. I remember that the mad in me came out, and I picked up my nephew and I pushed him out the door. I grabbed my niece and I threw her up about four stairs. Then there was the one they were beating on, I just grabbed her and gave her a shaking, saying, "Just smarten up and leave. You do not have enough sense to keep yourself safe, what is wrong with you?" That is the last time I had them here because I realised that I still had a lot of work to do on myself because I had not been that way for a long time. My kids freaked out, because they do not remember me like that. They were little, itty-bitties when I made that change. After that, I just went up in my room and just rocked. I scared myself. That freaked me out, and it scared them too.

We come from a long line of medicine people. That is the one thing that saved our butts because if it was not for our ancestors thinking that we would be able to manage all this stuff, we could not carry what we do. That has been our one saving grace, and the people that knew we were coming up blessed us with that. I know that not everybody has that opportunity, or has been given a chance like that. In actuality, I think the one thing that helped me quit using was when I became a pipe carrier[355]. The first pipe I received was to help women. Another thing that helped me quit was when I realised that I needed to get it together for me so I could help others see where their power and their spirit could lead them.

Like the alcohol, when the violence stopped, we could be violent in other ways. But in becoming pipe carriers, it was like we that are honest about it work twice as hard to get it, so when other people come for help, "Okay, this is the path that you want to walk, and it is a spiritual path, or your religion. This is what you can do to help, to get connected." We let them know that they have everything that they need to make that change within them. It is somebody giving them the permission to say, "Yes, you can do this, you have the ability." We have people coming to us with little itty-bitties, and these little itty-bitties have some really big problems. We say, "Well, you need to get it together for your kids, and then you can help your child with their struggle because you cannot give something away that you do not have yourself." One of our late teachers told me that. He let me know that my family were not beggars. I got angry with him.

He said, "No, think about it. How can you give away something that you do not have for yourself? That would make you a beggar if you did. You do not come from a long line of beggars; you come from a long line of helpers. You figure out how to help yourself, and then you can help others." I found out that you do not need to be a pipe carrier to do that. It helps, but once you get your life together, you can help your family just by being who you are. You can help by walking in a good way and healing, because if healing were easy then all of us would be healthy. You walk your walk and you talk your talk. If your family has not done this, then when you make the change and if they are still very unhealthy, they will pull you down if you allow them to. You run the risk of not having your family around because they may not be willing to accept you with the change so you kind of struggle through. The other gift that I was given was that you can have a biological family that you come from, and then you can have a family of choice. I have been pretty blessed because my family of choice has been my cousins. We love and we care about each other. We fight, but we do not fight with axes, bats, two-by-fours, furniture, appliances, vehicles, or by trying to hurt each other. Our fights are, "Well, I do not agree with you."

I once threw an upright freezer at my stepfather because he had just laid a lickin' on my mother. I missed him so I threw a twenty-five pound ice chisel through the windshield of his vehicle, and I missed. He was a big man, but he jumped up on the seat so the chisel went through the windshield, through the steering column, and into the seat. At the time I was thinking, "I am a poor shot." But now I know that I was not in my right mind then. I am not like that anymore; I do not throw furniture or people.

When things were very painful, or when we were really under stress, our family resorted to those old behaviours of wolf-packing and getting ugly to each other. We were hurting individually. All that old stuff came back, just short of the physical violence. Those of us that could see all the stuff happening, we watched and thought, "This is what it takes to get back to down and ugly?" Then we realised that those times were benchmarks for us that have been working on ourselves. We were this close to being like that. "What else do we need to do?" I asked a couple of my sisters and cousins. We figured out where we are heading, where we wanted to go, and what we needed to keep ourselves clean and sober so as to keep from hurting each other, our families, and ourselves. I really thought about this with my children, and how they see our family. I think my family are a bunch of nutcases but they love them. Some of us are closer to certain relatives than others but that is because we have made that connection, "I am not going to turn you away because you chose to walk a different way, or because you chose to be sober. I am going to love you no matter what." Those are the ones with whom we connect.

My grandmother taught me how to work hard, and how to value hard work. I have an aunt that has been a role model to me: no matter what, she is always been true to herself. I have seen her struggle with violence and with being treated badly by her husband. No matter how bad it was, she kept true to herself and she finally said, "Enough is enough, quit treating me like this and get out." She was not afraid to be alone with fourteen or thirteen kids, however many she had at the time. There were a few other older ladies that also were true to themselves. These women taught me that it was okay to be who I am. That does not mean the rest of the world has to like me, it means that I just need to like myself. When I did sober up, they were very proud of me.

My family, the ones that I used to drink with, thought, "You are going to go back drinking."

I thought, "No!" It was like that door closed for me. Sometimes it kind of squeaked open, but then I closed it again. I am not going back there because I know what it was like. I was scared of what was coming up, and sometimes it was like walking in the dark, but I do not want to go back there. I do not want to take my family back there. I am grateful for the few family members that have come around and accepted me as a sober person and let me know that I am still okay.

I became a sober person just about the time my children's father died. I had left because I knew he was going to kill himself; I just did not know exactly when. I had an inkling, was given some insight. I had a choice to save my children or my partner, and I made my choice to save my children and the only way I could do that was to get out of there. About a year after I left, he killed himself. What hurt me the most about it was that my kids would never know what kind of man he truly was. When he was not using he was a good person; he was a very lovely person and I could have spent the rest of my life with him. When he drank, he was violent. We would have fights, and we would take out walls. We did a lot of damage to each other. I was sober when I did all that stuff, that is why I went to Calder because I was just so into the crazy-making behaviour that he would do this with alcohol, and I could do it sober. That scared me because if he and I drank together, we probably would have killed each other.

When I did leave him I was still in the community, and he took shots with a thirty-ott-six[356] at me. He was going to axe me and the guy that I was supposedly with. He started chopping down the doors where I lived. I had two big doors because he liked kicking in doors too. He made it through one door, he was on the second one, and I had a sawed-off shotgun but I could not find the shells or cartridges for it. I just opened the door and jumped on him. I started hitting him. He had a full skidoo suit on, this was January, and it was minus sixty or something outside. I was in a muscle shirt, underwear, no socks; I was whaling on this guy, and he had a helmet on! I was beating on him so hard that my knuckles were all bleeding.

He was laughing at me. "Boy, you are crazy! Look what you are doing!" But, was I the crazy one? He had spent fifteen minutes scaring my children, saying he was going to kill me and whoever was in the house. His friends pulled me off of him, threw me back in the house, and took off with him. That is when I knew I had to get out of Sandy Bay because I was going to kill him or he was going to kill me. I had to leave because no matter where I was there, he would come, and he learned this from his family as well as I had learned it from my family: "If you bully somebody long enough, they will come back with you. That is true love."

My reply to that is, "NOT!"

I left Sandy Bay in 1985. People were sobering up and things were changing, but I just saw the crazy-making behaviours, the denying of another's reality because either your husband or your wife says, "No, that is not how it is. This is how it is." After being beaten down for so long, it became easier to give in than to fight back. Every time I came back for a visit, I saw people getting stronger. People were saying, "No, that is not how it is. I do not care how angry you are with me, you are not bullying me into this." Women were walking with their shoulders back and their heads up instead of all collared down, looking like scared mice. That was the biggest difference. People were saying it was not okay to be breaking into my house, threatening me and my children. The women were saying that. In the past, the guys would break in, it would be a bit of a tuffle, a bit of a fight, the guy would pass out, and then life would go on as if nothing had happened.

But now it was, "Well, you straighten out or do not come back here." That was the first time I heard them separating the behaviours from the person. "I love you but I do not like what you do." That was cool to hear. Right now most of us who have sobered up have had the courage to look deep within and start healing that stuff that we tried so hard to hide from, and to bury. Our belief system helps us heal from those things, no matter if we are the Christians, the Catholics, the Born-Agains, or the Traditionals.[357] We are all doing the same thing. We are healing, taking different roads to get there, but it is all going to the same place. It is going to a place that is more honest; it was going to a place that is more caring, and more loving.

Walking in a healing path can be very lonely because everybody else starts judging you. For me I had to get ahead in teachings; I had to raise myself in the way I wanted to be raised, and then be there for my children when they came to that point in their life. I see my family doing that as individuals, and sometimes we do not know what the other ones are doing but we are all going in the same way. When we meet up it is like, "I am doing this. Yeah! I was thinking about that. Yeah, I have got this idea. Yeah, I have been doing it that way too." So I know that our Higher Power is looking out for us whether we are Born Agains or Catholics, or Christians, or Traditionals. We are all going to the same place.

If you are going to do this, do it right. Be honest with yourself and true to yourself. Your family may not understand what you are doing and why you are doing it but as long as you know, and know that there is a Higher Power that looks out for all of us. I am living proof because if there was no God, no Creator, I would not be here right now. I would have died a long time ago and a very violent death. Some body is looking out for me, and that Higher Power is looking out for you too.

Frankly, I do not know if these men, my uncles and my grandfathers, knew how much influence their behaviour had on my decision to be in relationships. The whole community raised me because for better or for worse, I am a product of whatever things they did or did not do. An uncle told me about a month ago, "My girl, I am sorry that I was not a better role model for you."

I asked, "A role model for what?" I remember fighting with him in his relationships with his wives and I wanted to rip his heart out for doing that to them. When my uncle told me this, it was almost the greatest gift he gave me. It was the first time that we talked about that stuff. That was a month ago because the stuff that you have been going around talking to my family and that is making people think. It has been painful, but in a good way because people are saying what they have not had the nerve to say before this. Maybe it is the courage because two-thirds of us have raised our kids and are professionals in the human services. We are in the business of helping people. I find it ironic, because we are still trying to figure out how to help ourselves.

I have had people ask me before to share my story with them, and I just did not feel right, because I looked at their intention and what it was like. I know that you are doing your work in an honourable way. Therefore, I can give you what you need.

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[342] Financial abuse is the misuse or theft of financial resources for personal or monetary benefit.

[343] Mental abuse involves the use of coercion into incorrect thinking with the purpose of manipulating or harming another for personal gain.

[344] SIAST is an acronym standing for the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, a college that provides skills and technical training in Saskatchewan. It has campuses in Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Regina, and Prince Albert (Retrieved on December 13, 2006 from http://www.siast.sk.ca/siast/contactus/)

[345] Calder Centre is an in-patient treatment centre located in Saskatoon that works in partnership to assist individuals and families with recovery from chemical dependency. The Calder co-dependency course addresses the issues that arise from living with a family member who has an alcohol or other drug

women and how my sisters and I fought with our partners. The way everyone fought was dirty fighting, meaning that another person doubted your reality, or told you what your reality is. They would be saying how stupid you were. We had learned to stop hitting but we used emotional and mental violence. The physical violence was no longer there, but there was still this thing about power-over, that need to have power over somebody, to make yourself feel better so your life does not seem so awful. This ugliness went right through the generations.

When people were all sober, the question became, "How do we break this?" What happened was that a couple of years later the men and the women in those relationships took their power back.

The women started saying, "No, you are not telling me what I believe." It was a gradual process. It just threaded through everything, through how finances were, how the children were raised, what I was going to do with my time and that I do not answer to you, that I answer to no one but the Almighty and me.

When that happened, there was a shift with these people. They said, "Well, what am I going to do now? I am not going to be able to boss this person around."

It was almost as if somebody pulled these men and women aside and said, "You do not boss anybody around. That is not a relationship." Some people took that teaching to heart, while others are still struggling with relationships. I see them working very hard at them, though, and that gives me hope that there are men that are willing to look at themselves.

There is a guy that calls me morning and night, and my daughter just does not even answer the phone anymore on those times. I came down here; it was 6:05 A.M., he called, and I was going to call him back to tell him to leave me alone for the hundredth thousandth time. I thought, "No, let him call all he wants. I am not going there with him, just short of having a restraining order or changing my number. I am not going to do that. No, is no to me."

If I react, he will have won. "Oh yeah, I got her this time." It is almost like, "I will bully her. I will poke her so many times that she will eventually give in." To them, bullying is true love. It does not work with me anymore, and I know these guys are scared of me. They are scared of me that I can see right through them. I am not playing the games anymore, but they just do not know how to let go. I have given them suggestions but they are still in that mindset that it is like being on a skipped record. They just keep playing that same part of a tune over and over again. It is not my responsibility to get them unstuck. I have shown them how they can, and told them it was their option to continue until they are sixty-five years old on that skip if they chose, but not to include me.

I have some nieces and nephews that put my aunts and uncles and my grandparents to shame in the area of violence. These young people are vicious. But, the majority of them are fairly healthy. That gives me hope. I do not think that my kids would have been able to do what they have done if I had not made some changes in my own life first. Sometimes, when you do a three-sixty[348], you end up going right back where you were. Some of my family has done that, thinking, "Okay, I am not going to do it the way my mom and dad, or the people that raised us did. I am not going to go there."

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problem that can result in its own pathology (Calder Centre Program Description, 2004)

[346] Wolf-packing refers to the maintenance of the norms or the social order of a group by psychological or more aggressive means.

[347] NADAP is an acronym that stands for the Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program, a federally-funded, prevention-based program that provides culturally-based counselling and prevention programs for community members affected by overuse of alcohol and/or other drugs.

[348] A three-sixty is a colloquial term for three hundred sixty degrees, a complete circle. It can mean putting forth effort and doing work without making progress.

[349] "Wusses" are people who are weak willed or timid; wimps.

[350] James Smith First Nation is located 58 kilometres east of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. This First Nation has a present on-reserve population of 1,592 members (Prince Albert Rural Municipality Profile, James Smith First Nation Profile, 2005).

[351] Muskoday First Nation, a member of the Saskatoon Tribal Council, is located southeast of Prince Albert bordered by the rural municipalities of Birch Hills and Prince Albert. Muskoday has an on-reserve population of approximately 600. (Prince Albert Rural Municipality Profile, Muskoday First Nation Profile, 2005).

[352] A twelve is a box containing twelve bottles of beer.

[353] A twelve-step program is an outline of living to help a person to recover from an illness or addiction. Originally based upon the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, a program of living is outlined which is divided into 12 distinct tasks. Members meet regularly to discuss their experience and, challenges as well as to provide support to each other (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001)

[354] The age range is 50 to 70 years old.

[355] Pipe carriers represent their families, tribes, communities, and nations. Their duties require much of the individuals; they pray for healing, for peace, and live a life of honour (Little Pinn and Little Eagle, 2002).

[356] A thirty-ott-six or .30 – 06 was a high-powered rifle that was introduced in 1906 to the United States army, and remained widely in use into the 1970s. It is so named because it uses a .308 inch or calibre bullet, and because it was introduced in 1906, hence 30, zero, six, or thirty-ott-six (Retrieved on January 21, 2006 from http://www.answers.com/topic/30-06-Springfield).

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[357] The Traditionals are those who find their primary spirituality by walking a spiritual path in a manner similar to the Aboriginal ancestors.

Appendix I: FD's (Friend's) Story

WA was a non-alcoholic hired to work in the Rehab Centre in Sandy Bay. I know that she had worked in a Rehab Centre in the south. It was shortly after that or just before that HA sobered up. HA, WA, and I became quite close friends; I spent a lot of time over at their place. I spent a lot of time with HA out in the bush and at the fish camps. I also spent a lot of time at their home. One thing I remember is when he first sobered up, they had no food. But he was trapping and he got a lynx. She cut it up and marinated it and that was what they had to eat that day. But every year after that before his AA birthday he caught a lynx. He did not go to too many A.A.[358] meetings; he went to a few. We used to talk a fair amount. His parents had a cabin in between Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay. It is still there. I used to go and spend a lot of time with the old man and the old lady. HA's mother had a son that had drowned and when she saw me I reminded her of him and she kind of adopted me as her son.

That just kind of solidified the friendship, we were already pretty good friends. When WA was working at the Rehab Canter, then the Outpatient Centre, HA was running a youth home just outside of Sandy Bay. They had the camp at Mugaman Bear Lodge. He used to bring some of the kids into town and into the house; they were pretty good that way with the kids. This would be about 1982 or 1983, so that was near the beginning of his sobriety. I think he was good for most of the kids. They took some of these kids into the house as part of the family. HA would get really angry and he would scream and holler and shout, and then it seemed that after he blew up it would kind of go away. I do not think he held a resentment too long, once he screamed and hollered and got it out. But when he did that, nobody said anything. I do not know whether they were afraid or whether they just found it best not to say anything and let it blow over. I do not think WA was ever afraid of him; she just realised that there was no use antagonising it and making it any worse. One thing I found was that there was a lot of cursing and swearing around the kids. At first that kind of bothered me, but later it did not. Whenever he would get angry, he would just let it out.

I do not remember seeing him hit her. I am not saying that it did not happen, but it did not happen when I was around. There were some verbal threats when he was wild and when he would be yelling and screaming. I think that she knew that that was just the anger. When a person is angry, sometimes they say a lot of things that they do not mean. From what I saw, she was just allowing it to pass over because it had happened so many times. She might have been afraid but she never mentioned it. She did not show the signs of fear that I know.

One winter when he was trapping, he got quite worried and frustrated. He would go check his traps and they were sprung. You could see that there had been fur in them, but what had been caught in them were gone. He could not understand why. It was bothering him a lot. Then he found out that the kids had found a Ouija Board in the dump and they were playing with it. One of his brothers in Winnipeg was involved in native ceremonies; he phoned him. I talked to BA, who talked to an Elder. They explained to me what I should do. HA's brother and I took the Ouija Board out to a clear spot and we did some things and burned it. We got rid of it, and we did a ceremony. The trouble in his trapping stopped.

I do not remember seeing HA being really happy. It seemed like he always had something to worry about. He was always on the go. He would sit down for a while but it did not seem to me like he relaxed very much. He had to be always doing something. He would spend a fair amount of time in the fish camp. Maybe that is when he relaxed because maybe that is where he learned to relax. When he was a kid, they spent a lot of time in the bush. From what I know not only about them but other people, that when you are taken out of your original environment, it is going to cause some kind of problems.[359] With so many other people, they were taken out of their tranquil environment and they are put in to the hurly burly of modern society. It was like taking a fish out of water. How that would affect him, I do not know, but he never relaxed. I did not see him relax.

I do not know what their relationship was like when I was not around. But I did not really see all that much loving concern. When you see two people, a man and wife, a lot of times they will show their affection even in front of other people. I did not see that much of it. I am not saying he did not love her, and I am not saying she did not love him. I just did not see that kind of interaction. That could be because he was away so much. It is like somebody that is in the army who has his/her family in one spot. Then they move the person in the army, or send them over to a foreign country, and that person is gone from his/her family for long stretches of time. You know your family is there, but you do not interact with them. Now-a-days the forces go out all over the country and they have internet, and e-mail, and they can have the constant communication. I do not even remember HA taking a bush radio;[360] he might have, but I cannot remember if he did. But there seemed to be a lack of intimacy between the two of them. Different people have different ways of showing love and affection. They had been together a long time, so maybe there was that kind of understanding between them. I find their relationship today funny, she is here by herself, and he is off someplace else. I do not think he is here very often, yet they are still married. She did the same thing when she went to PA[361] to go to school. She spent two or three years there.

It was a patriarchal home where he ruled the roost. It seemed like what he said, went; she did not have too much say in major decisions. When he was home, he controlled what went on in the house.

I have seen some mellowing in him since the heart attack,[362] but not much. After his time in the hospital, he was here in La Ronge, and there was quite a bit of mellowing in him. Now some of that is gone, but not to the degree that it was before. It seems that some of the aggressiveness is gone. He still has a hard time accepting he might be wrong.

When WA speaks to him with her knowledge, it seems as if she tries to preach to him. Either she is trying to preach to him, or he sees it as preaching and that may be why sometimes he resists doing as she suggests. He has got to control everything in his life. The controlling goes down to, where in that society a male who controls is the leader.[363] When they took him out of the bush, he lost some of the control in his life. He lost the tranquillity; he lost where he liked to be.

He was in his element out of the house, away from the family, in the bush. When I went out to the fish camps with him, there was a change in him. If somebody at the fish camp, his hired men, did something wrong he might get mad, but he would not explode as he would back in the house. He seemed to mellow out in the bush. He loved spending time out at his parent's place, just north of Mugaman Bear Lodge.

One time the old man and I were out collecting wild rice the old fashioned way. We were in a canoe and I was paddling. The old man had two sticks, and he would bring the wild rice into the boat and pound it. It was a beautiful day, sunny, not a cloud in the sky, and this flock of geese went by. They were heading south, and the old man said, "You watch. They are pulling the cold from the North. It is going to get cold; it is going to get windy."

I looked at him and thought, "What do you know?" But within a half an hour, it had clouded over and it got very cold. He knew what he was talking about!

His parents used to cook in the traditional way sometimes. They cooked over the open fire. They might use a pot but they did not use electricity. They had a big picnic table outside. One night, the old man said that he woke up and heard noise outside. He looked out the window and they had left a five pound bag of sugar on the table. He watched as a bear come and sat on the table, and downed it.

HA was also good at fixing mechanical things. One time we were going to the fish camp, and crossing the lake. It was pretty rough; the wind was blowing. It was springtime, and we were going to pull the last of the traps out. We came into this bay. It was really warm and calm in the bay and everything was nice. Then we hit the bay and the shear pin broke on the motor in the boat. And now we were trying to figure out how we were going to get back. He was able to fix it to the point where we got out of the bay. I cannot swim and I really worried because if the boat swamped, I would be gone. We got out of the bay and when we got into the open water, the wind calmed down and it was really smooth. We got out in the middle of the lake. Then somebody came along with a motorboat, and hauled us in.

HA showed me how to set traps. I used to trap a bit around his parents' place at Mugaman Bay. Unless you have done it, you do not know the tranquillity of being out in the bush by yourself where it is nice and quiet. If you stayed out there long enough, you could become a loner, where you would not want to be around people at all. If you were forced out of that environment, when you liked being alone, or liked being in that kind of environment, then that would to bother you. It would change your temperament.

One thing you never heard HA talk about very much was Native Spirituality. His mother was a medicine woman. Some people used to go to her, for her to make medicine. But he got completely away from that until he started having trouble with his traps, and we performed that one ceremony. Now his brother is into doing that.

About the dynamics of the community, one time we had pre-schoolers sniffing glue. A bunch of girls were up on the rock, and they were sniffing glue. She fell into the water, but her oesophagus was already closed because she had been sniffing the glue. A community meeting was held. WA had probably been living in that community at least ten years. Many people were at the community meeting. WA said something and somebody told her to shut up because she did not belong here; she was an outsider. That might have been because she was a women, because they listened to what I said. But then, I had a position in the community.

I also remember that they were trying to get a community college in Sandy Bay, and they were going to have a meeting in Creighton, and Sandy Bay was supposed to make the presentation. They asked me to come along with them, so I went with the community leaders. When it came time for Sandy Bay to make its presentation the people I had come with left, they were not around, they had left. When they come back, I said, "You know, they called Sandy Bay, and you guys were not here."

They said, "Well you were here, you could have spoken."

But I said, "No, because I did not know what you wanted to say." But they expected me to make a presentation without any information. I think that is because I was in that position.

I do not think HA has really reconciled the fact that he is out of the bush. He never got into native spirituality, or any kind of spirituality. He never went to church, he said he believed, but he never went to church. So he was in limbo. Now, he goes with his brother to some of his ceremonies. Spirituality is a huge part of healing because you do not have to do everything yourself. You can turn it over, and leave it there. That might be one of the things that HA is missing. Just being out in the bush is a spiritual experience in itself, but you still need contact with others.

It seems like HA and WA would be apart for months, and months, and months on end. If you go back in tradition, then that could be the way it was a long time ago. The guys would go out on hunting trips, and they might be gone for maybe, a couple of weeks or so, but not for months, and months and months. I really cannot see how a relationship can flourish in that kind of atmosphere. Perhaps that is how they can stay together at all. It is just like a person having a field job: the office is here, and he works way over there. You still have to go back to the office at least once a week to keep in contact. If you do not, then you are way over here, and you feel left out. I do not know how often they contact each other or talk to each other. I just wonder what that does to the relationship. But then, some relationships are better when people are apart.

WA tried. She worked on herself when she was in Sandy Bay. She tried to get Al-Anon going when she was there. Now since she been in La Ronge, I do not think she has gone to Al-Anon that much. At times, she tries to be in control, the controller, and it could be because she lost control, he controlled. Now she is trying to get control. With HA she sometimes tries to use her intellectual knowledge, and he sees it as trying to lecture him and force him. I think she might be better if she just let whatever happens to happen.

SNA used his music as an escape from some things that went on. DA became pregnant when she was young. Going go back to the patterns of children of alcoholics, when they are not getting a lot of emotional love at home, they are going to seek it other places. HA and WA did love the kids, but they had a hard time showing them that love. Because they could not show it to themselves, they had a hard time showing it to the kids.

The Catholic priest controlled the community. People in Sandy Bay use medicine, healing herbs. When he went there, he made them pull up the herbs that they used for their medicines and destroy them because they were the devil's work. That had a strong impact on a community because they had been doing that for centuries. After he retired and left the community, they found a copy of a letter that he had sent to the Archbishop calling the people of Sandy Bay *animals.*[364] There for a while he ruled the roost, and that has got to have an impact on the community.

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[358] A.A. meetings are meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous.

[359] Windsor and McVey (2005) note that only recently have studies been undertaken to investigate the impacts that forced relocation have on such issues as rates of mortality and mental illness amongst dispossessed peoples (p. 147). Wickrama and Kaspar (2006) note that psychosocial losses such as prolonged displacement contribute to depressive and post traumatic stress disorder symptoms (p. 713). Usher (2003) notes that people stay in places that by conventional economic measures do not have much going for them. In this

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kind of economy, you do not have to go to the grocery store to put food on the table, you do not pay a mortgage, and the kinship-based social support network ensures that everyone's basic needs are covered by the exchange of food, labour, equipment, and personal care. Collective title in land is essential to the viability of this economy. Loss of this economy has meant a sharp increase in violent deaths in Grassy Narrows, Whitedog, and Shoal Lake Indian Reserves in the year that these communities experienced 'harvest disruption," a term which means a permanent degradation of the habitat of fish, aquatic mammals, birds and wild rice that diminishes the peoples' basic economic way of life (pp. 371-374). Salvalaggio, Kelly, and Minore (2003) noted that relocation for treatment of a physical illness requires psychological adjustment (pp. 19-24).

[360] Bush radio, or mobile radio was a system of communication whereby the person out on the land took a transistor radio with them. People wishing to communicate with that person then sent a message to their local radio dispatcher, who transmitted the message, usually at a certain time of day. All who were listening to the radio could hear the message.

[361] PA is a name commonly used for Prince Albert, a city 250 kilometers south of La Ronge (AAA, Manitoba Saskatchewan Map, 1998).

[362] The heart attack occurred in 1993.

[363] Levinson (1989) notes that wife beating is more likely to occur in societies in which men control the wealth and in which adults use physical violence to resolve conflicts. He also notes that family violence is not universal, and that it would be less frequent if such factors as equality and cooperation were used to guide family relationships.

[364] Sr. J. Corbeil told me that she had heard about an incident with the Priest of Sandy Bay and the residents of the community where the residents of the community wished to borrow the priest's vehicle. The priest refused. There was a struggle in which the priest was tied to a tree, and the tree set on fire. The priest managed to get free; he did not die. The letter may have been referring to this incident. (Sr. J. Corbeil, personal communication, September 13, 2006)

Appendix J: NRs' (Neighbours') Story

I was born and raised in Sandy Bay, and I have worked here all my life. I know HA very well. HA was in the bush when he was young, and then moved to Sandy Bay when he was older. HA seems to be an alright guy but he has a quick temper. Even when you talk to him about something, he gets mad right away. He does not get violent, but he just has got a quick temper. I am not close with WA, but my wife is really close to her. To me, it seemed like they did pretty good for their life, and for their kids' lives.

During the ten years that I lived across the street from HA, I saw him drink on and off. He drank quite a bit when he was younger when he first started going out with WA. I never saw him be violent to his wife. Things between them got better and then things got worse.

WA decided that she needed to change. She knew a lot of the problems that people were having. She was a good person to talk with; she helped a lot of people. She knew she needed to further her own self and that is exactly what she did. She did not put down HA but she looked at improving herself. She went out and improved her education so that she had some skills to work with. She did a lot of things in Sandy Bay. She had a cafe that did not turn out too well. She got a job in P.A. for a while and then she moved to La Ronge. Today, she has good skills. HA improved himself; he did things that he wanted to do. Things did not work out well for them. Now HA still lives here and WA moved to La Ronge.

WA comes from Flin Flon and HA comes from Sandy Bay and it is a big change when you come from Flin Flon to come and live in Sandy Bay.

What made it really hard for them was that the community put them and their kids down. They put down their kids as being half white and half Indian. Being married to a white, there are always people that put you down. There is racism here and even in Saskatoon, there is racism.

What helped HA and WA to improve was that they quit drinking. That made a difference for him. Because a lot of times he would be gone some place to work and she would be left alone with the kids. She had given up the booze. When they first moved up here, HA worked hard for his family. WA took a program and worked at the rehab here. He took quite a few programs. They were role models. HA and WA are into the culture.[365] HA's brother is a Medicine Man.

HA cannot leave Sandy Bay. It is pretty hard to move down south after being raised in the north. That is a different life altogether. You always have to have money or a friend when you are living in the city, where here you can do whatever you want.[366] HA likes fishing and hunting. He has been doing that all his life. It is relaxing. It is a lot of exercise and less stress than living in the city. It is more enjoyable.

I became friends with WA after I married my husband, and we began to work up here. I would go to Al-Anon meetings with her once a week. We did a lot of sharing, and we enjoyed it. She was a good person to know because she was very strong in what she believed. I respected her and I learned a lot from her. They had a lot of problems, but she worked well with them. Eventually, she left town to go to Prince Albert to take classes. She wanted something different in her life and that is what she did.

It has been hard for me. My friends left. WA left. They left to help themselves. They realised that they had difficulty and they could not deal with the situation here. They never came back, they found some other place. I was very disappointed when WA left. She was my strong point because I had faith in her. I could trust her. I could talk to her and I could deal with my problems. With my other friends, it was the same way. I work here. I could not help my kids, but we are working on it. I would not put my kids at the bottom. They did not drink, and they realised that drinking and doing drugs do not help you. They only depress you. They make you feel suicidal sometimes.

We are living here. They want to do better with their lives and plenty of times we do not have money. They have worked for what they have and they are improving. A lot of girls will talk with my daughter because she is quiet. She can be trusted. But she does not want to live here. She lives out of town to help herself.

When the people were living in the bush, they had to do a lot of work to survive. There was not much alcohol in the bush because you had to fly out or go to Flin Flon to get your booze. It was not hard to get because you could make your own. They did not make very much of it, there was not enough money for that. In Sandy Bay when I was young, you could just leave your stuff out in the open and nobody would touch it because there was so much respect for the elders. You were not allowed to do anything like stealing. In my time we could not wait to go out to the bush. That is a big change between my time and today's society.

In the bush, there were no relationship problems. People were too busy trying to survive out there. They had to work. The women were busy making moose hides or preparing food, all the things they had to do. The men were busy trapping, hunting, fishing, and bringing home wood. Their parents showed them what to do, but now there is none of that.

Before this time, the elders told their daughters what was good for them and what was no good. They were strong. That is how we saw the elders. I spend a lot of time with elders and their stories when I was growing up. I used to listen to them as a kid. Some of them would say something that was way ahead that they had already seen. And I could see that already. They gave me values in the stories. They said to me, "One of these days there will not be any fish or any moose or anything like that because the land and the water is going to be polluted." Even then they were already talking about the waterways. It was just like they knew it.

Relationship problems all started when the Power Plant[367] started; that is when people started moving into Sandy Bay because working there gave them some money to feed their family. That is why Sandy Bay started as a community. In the years before the plant started, Sandy Bay was further down the river. There were a lot of families living out there. My dad moved in here to come and work at Island Falls.

When I was young we never had fighting. We used to work together. We had the same goals because we were bought up that way. We were told to respect a woman. If it was not for the woman, there would be no children. The woman is the one that carries the child. It is sacred. These are some of the things the elders used to say; you have got to respect the woman. She is raising your kids. Your job is to go out there and look after your family. That is the way we learned, when we were growing up. You have got to work. If you want to have something for your family, you have got to work for it.

When we went to school, we were not allowed to speak our language. That is why in Sandy Bay half of us spoke in English. We were not allowed to talk in Cree at school. Now, some people speak Cree but not that many. People now speak mostly in English. You talk to kids in Cree and they say, "I do not understand you." The language and the culture is going. When we were in school, we had a big black strap. When you were bad, you got it. I got it that way once. If you laughed at elders in my time, you got a lickin' for it. That is how they respected elders. So you knew right away that you really had to respect.

Then welfare came and handed everything out. Now people are saying that the Indians are lazy. Well, who caused that problem? When you take a good look at it, it was not the Indians, it is the government that brought the money and gave out free handouts. Now the government is crying about giving free handouts, but it is too late to try to change that. When you take a look at it, if there was no welfare today the Indian people would not survive. They do not have the skills to look after a family. Girls are having babies at a young age, and the boyfriends take off. They are not responsible. The girls turn around and give their babies to their parents to look after. Then they have another one, and the parents look after that one too. There has got to be a stop to this; they have got to learn that you have got to look after your own babies.

Our community got worse when there was welfare. Then Indian Affairs stepped in and gave the money to the community. People were getting paid to stay at home. It got to a point that nobody would want to go out to work. They did not want to leave the community to go hunting or trapping like they used to. That is what it is like even today now. They want to go hunting and they figure that they have to ask for a favour to take them out there, just to go hunting. They are not interested in how to survive out there. They would rather just stay around and watch TV or play video games.

When you go to the bush, you use your time. In the city, the kids sit down and either watch a video or they are bored; they do not have enough to do. In the bush you are doing things. You are much more active. You are always active because you have to do these things. Nobody else will do it for you. If you do not get wood, you do not stay warm. If you do not catch a fish or snare a rabbit, you will be hungry. Some people no longer eat wild meat or even fish. They buy it from the store. They do not know how to set a fire.

In my time, we were not allowed to get drunk or anything. You would get into really deep trouble if you started drinking young. The mothers were really careful with their daughters. A long time ago, they would not let them go running around or anything like that. They made the arrangement about who their children were going to marry, arranged marriages. That was before my time. During my time, you went out and found your own partner. But the moms still kept a strong hold of their daughters and the dads taught their sons to respect women.

In those years you had to be a certain age, twenty-one, before you could get into the bar. Then they dropped it to eighteen[368] and that is where trouble really started. That is also when we had our road open. By 1976, the same year that we got the satellite TV, the road was open year-round to Sandy Bay. Before 1976 there was an access road in the winter time. In the winter time, they hauled booze in to Sandy Bay on the winter road. But it was still just partying; there still was not that much violence. In the summer, they used planes to haul freight. Even when the road was built all the way to Sandy Bay it was still hard to travel because the road was not really that good and there were not that many vehicles then. Now the highway is busy all the time. That is how all the booze and drugs are coming to the north. The violence started when some of the younger generations started drinking.

In 1976 this community was much better than it is now. Many people had joined Al-Anon and AA. A lot of positive things were happening; they were improving their lifestyle with their family and their friends. Everybody was more involved doing other things rather than drinking.

In today's society everything is easy. Now you got your water running and your electric lights. In my time there was no such thing as a television or electric lights in the community. Today there are a lot of drugs and alcohol in the community. There is nothing for the younger generation; they are more or less being left on their own, the younger kids. That is why they get into a lot of trouble, even with the RCMP. The young mothers and young fathers, some of them are young; they do not know how to be a parent. They are too young.

In today's society, anything you leave outside is gone. It disappears. Nobody wants to go off in the bush to learn about the culture or the way of life. Yet it is important to learn how to survive out there. They have culture camps[369] in the school, but there is not enough time there. The program is only a one-day trip. You cannot learn anything in one day. It is more like an outing than learning how to survive in the bush. You cannot learn anything. There are a lot of things to learn to survive. It is a thrill. They really enjoy it. They are hauling in fish: little ones trying to catch fish. They go trapping and set rabbit snares and they enjoy it, but it takes time.

Now this community has begun using more alcohol and drugs. The kids are frustrated. There is no out. They are trying to find an avenue out but the cycle is deep. They are sunk in, and they cannot get out. They want to do something with their life but they come back to Sandy Bay and they are afraid to leave. They are having a lot of problems and alcohol seems to be the only avenue that they have, so they use it. They would get sober if they could listen to you, but then they do not want to talk about it. They have girls fighting with other girls and boys fighting other boys.

There are problems in our community. My daughter definitely had a problem with alcohol when she was thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen. We wanted to help her. She did not know what to do about boredom in this community, and it was down-played. She left town, got help, and moved to La Ronge. She moved to Flin Flon to get away from the problem. We needed help, she needed help. And it did help her. There were a lot of factors to look at. One factor was people coming here to help, but they could not relate. They could not relate to the people in Sandy Bay and they would say that. They could not provide the information to help. People could sit down and talk with them but the people needed feedback. If they did not get feedback, it does not help at all. Drugs did not help. If they used drugs and alcohol to try and fix their problems, they got depressed, and went down further. They needed help. They had peers but they needed more of a group atmosphere. But groups were not to be trusted. There was a lot of gossip in them. Everyone had to watch who they were talking to, because it would be all over the community. Everyone knew that and was scared of that. They were scared to go to talk to people because they did not want any involvement, all the way to the school. But they needed help. A lot of these kids needed help and they were looking for help, but they did not know where to get it. A lot of them talked about suicide. They did not know what to do with their lives but they wanted out. They wanted out and they needed help.

Today, we see a lot of kids here that are trying to quit, yet they get put down when they do quit. Some of them that have already tried drugs and alcohol get pushed by their own friends. That is the way it is in the community. I have seen a lot of people being put down when they come out of the rehab, and these are grown-ups. Half of the time they cannot quit drinking. We quit and they were jealous. Then we really had to go and look for somebody to help, but if we did not look for somebody for help, then we were back to the same thing as before. We quit when we realised it was affecting our lives. We were concerned about our kids. They were our priority so we quit. It was not easy but we did. People in the community put us down. They avoided us. It was lonely. We were on our own. All the time, people are nagging at us, "Here, here, have one."

A lot of times when I was offered to have a toke I said, "No."

"Boy, we can have a lot of fun with that."

I said, "No, I am not going to have fun out of that. It is too sick and it is wrong." That is the way it is with the young generation today. When you quit drinking, they try to pour it down your mouth. It is just like they want you to start drinking again.

It is easier if you have some people to talk to. I was fortunate. WA was next door, and there were a few more of us. We had a good bond and we were together. Eventually the bond goes so you need more people to try and help. You need support. You need other people. You need to go out and bring the support back to keep up your strength in what you are doing. WA used to do that. She would go to Flin Flon to meetings there. Then she would bring back to our group what she learned there. It was good.

Today, this community does not have any role models. The role models right now are not role models that will help support students. There is too much drinking and drugs so they are not good role models. Even if you are good role model, they just turn around and put you down. They just want to see you go back to what you were before; that is the way it is. It is pretty hard, especially for some of them.

We do not have parents looking after the kids right now. They put up a lot of the kids with somebody for a while, but they need to quit. There were too many problems. The kids are going to their grandparents' or their aunt's. A lot of people are having difficulty in their own lives, so they cannot really help. Our offspring are having difficulties looking after their kids so that is where many are hung up now.

When you are drinking and you do not talk to anybody it gets worse. If you beat your wife, it is wrong. You end up in jail, and you are scaring your family and your kids. When your kids see that, then one day they are going to do the same thing. The young generation are doing the same things that they see. Some of them listen and some of them do not.

The kids need goals. A lot of them do not have goals right now. Some people do beadwork. There is not a lot, but some of them do beadwork. They love their kids but they are too mixed up in their own lives. We keep getting moose hides. Hardly anybody makes moose hide now. A lot of times, I killed a moose, and ended up throwing the moose hide away because nobody could do it.

They need someone to talk to. That is a number one a priority. You cannot keep everything bottled down inside you; if you do then you will drink. You need friends that you can talk with, one on one, either in town or by telephone. You have got to find somebody that you can discuss your problems with, and deal with them. You need goals. You have got to figure out what you can do and try to work on that. You know, you are looking at a lot of sexual abuse within the community. Eighty percent of the kids are abused at some age. That is a shocker but it is not dealt with. A lot of people are having difficulties dealing with violence in the home. Some of them come to school and are hurting someone, and say, "That happens at home. What is the big deal?" There was no respect at home so they do not understand about respect.

The parents are part of the problem. You see parents arguing over two kids that got in trouble. They blame each other. Even little kids know that. They say, "You cannot get me." When something happens, they do not believe the teacher. They would rather believe their kids. They put the teachers down. It is the same thing with the nurse and the RCMP. They do not look at how they are trying to help. They are trying to help the community, but they get looked down on.

The Fire Chief and the First Responders get put down a lot instead of getting a 'thank you,' even though we are trying to help the community. I do not get paid for what I do; I volunteer. A lot of times I get up in the middle of the night to go and haul a patient to the hospital, but I get put down. Those who put me down get back up from their parents.

We had a priest, but now he has gone. Now a priest comes here once, maybe twice a month and other people in the community do the mass the rest of the time. The church is having the same problem as the rest of the community. They are not working together. They are pulling things down and trying to shake up things instead of pulling together. The same thing is going on at the school.

The people in the community end up using drugs. They need help. They want it, really want it. They love their kids. They want to do more for them but the dedication and the responsibility is not there. Down south? The responsibility is there. In Saskatoon, you get your kid up in the morning. Your kid is in school at 9 o'clock. In Sandy Bay, your child may not come to school until 10:30 or 12 o'clock. The dedication is not there. A lot of people stay up all night; it is a different culture, a culture that was not here before. The culture changed in two decades. It is not a positive change; it is a negative change. Our culture is at the low end of the pole right now. We are having a hard time. We need change, but we need Native people to spur it on. It cannot be white people coming from the south. It has got to be Native people that say, "Okay, I am tired of this. I want to help my community." The people to do it cannot be the same ones that are selling drugs. Those are not good role models.

Before when something happened, they wanted people from down south to come and do a workshop. But the change and the help has got to come from the community and nobody else. It is the community that has got to deal with the problem, not somebody from down south who does not know what is going on.

We are in our fifties, so we are passed it. We did our drinking. It did not work for us so we did something else worth while. We asked for help. We did well. At this point, we tell the young people, "This is not right."

They say, "You are too old. You do not know what it is like." They do not realise that we went through all that ourselves.

Racism is a problem here, and has been for a long time. Betty Osborne, who was native, was murdered in The Pas[370] in 1971. She was the girlfriend of our Chief's brother. Four white people did it.[371] They got one but the other three got away with it. HA and I started the First Relations Program in Flin Flon to try to do something about the racism. It turned out pretty good. Some of the people in Flin Flon changed a little bit when their awareness of racism was raised. We went to Flin Flon, and raised a lot of money. They got some money and came back and started to do programs. There were a hundred people in the arena; they wanted it. So we set it up. There was a group of us that worked together. We had a director and we had three age groups to work with. We had the RCMP, we had the nurses, and they helped. It did well for a while, but then it dwindled because they did not stay with it.

We are talking to you because at least you know half of the problem in the north. I used to sit in on the Health Board in Saskatoon. They would talk about the north, and finally one day I got up and told them, "We will give you a job." I asked them to do research to find out what is wrong with those people. Right away they looked at each other. Everybody knew that they did not know what was going on up north. They did not want to know. There is a big difference from down south and up north. You got to get to know the people and once you get to know the people then you are not ignorant of what the problems are, which is good. The people in the south need to know. That is the only way we are going to get better. We have got to work with the rest of the country. That is the only way we are going to solve our problems. If we do not do anything about it, it will never go away.

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[365] "Into the culture" refers to the practice of traditional spirituality.

[366] In economies like those in northern Saskatchewan, Usher (2003) notes that, "You do not have to go to the grocery store to put food on the table, you do not pay a mortgage, and the kinship-based social support network ensures that everyone's basic needs are covered by the exchange of food, labour, equipment, and personal care. You do not need the same income you would if you moved to the city" (p. 372).

[367] The Island Falls power plant was built between 1928 and 1930 (Retrieved January 11, 2006 from http.//www.islandfalls.ca/ifintro.htm).

[368] In 1970, the Saskatchewan legal drinking age was dropped from 21 to 19 years of age. In 1970, the age was dropped again from 19 to 18 years of age. In 1976 the Saskatchewan legal drinking age was raised to 19 years of age and has remained at that age ever since. (P. Worby, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, personal communication, January 24, 2007).

[369] Culture camps are quite prevalent in the north. In these camps, traditional people take youth or others untrained in traditional ways out into the bush to learn the traditional ways of living.

[370] The Pas is a mining town in north eastern Manitoba located 150 kilometres south of Flin Flon on Highway 10 (Rand McNally, 2003, p. 121).

[371] Racism in The Pas in the 1970s was strong. "The town has long operated as a white enclave surrounded by Aboriginal people who were tolerated as customers but not welcomed as part of the community. That stems from and reveals the intentional and unintentional racism which underlies the attitude of

our society toward the original people of this country (Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission, Ch. 9).

Appendix O: Guiding questions

Healing from Family Violence battering in a Northern Aboriginal Context:
A Case Study

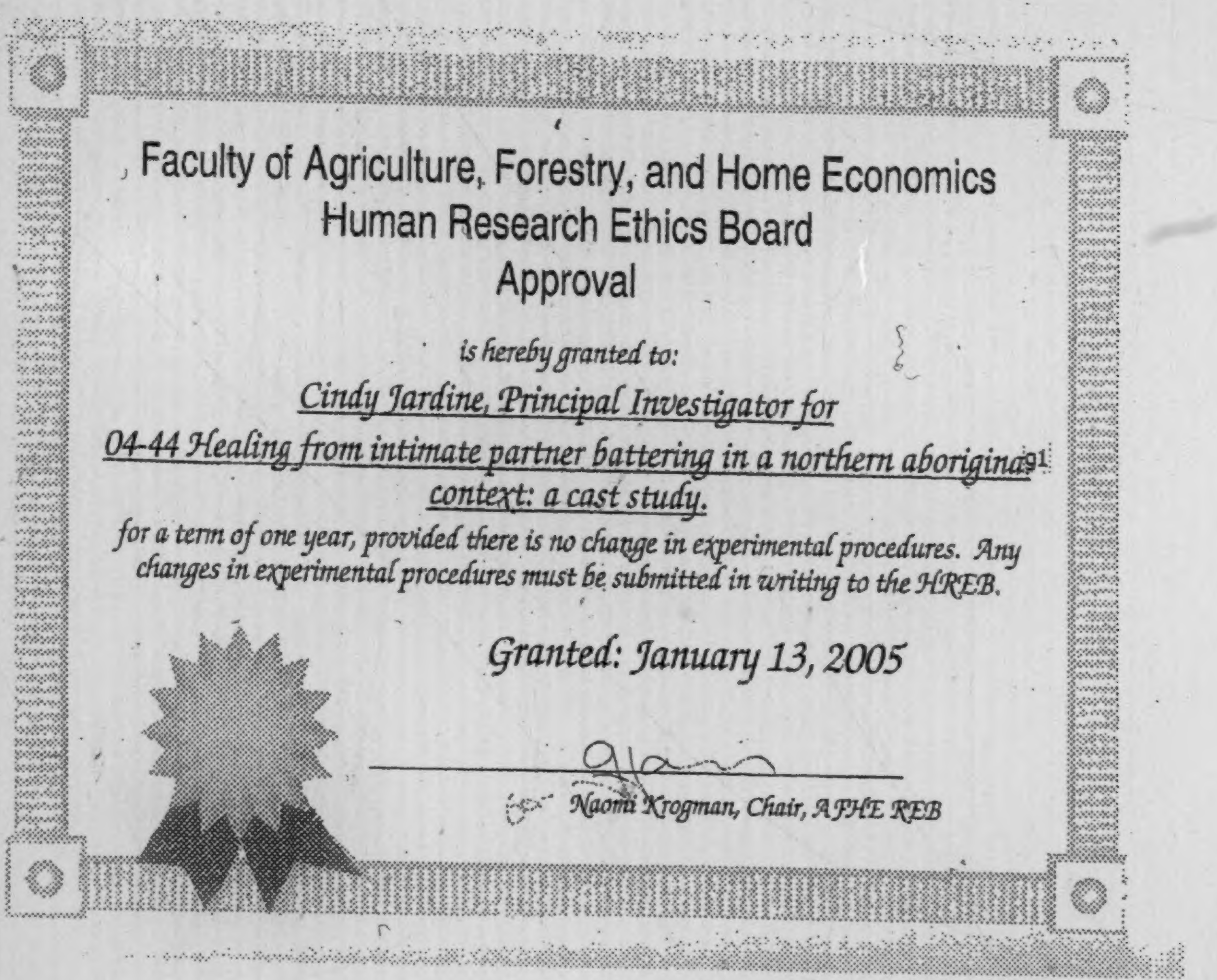
A Study by Sandra Malcolm, supervised by Dr. Cindy Jardine,
Dr. Judith Spiers, and Dr. Derek Truscott

Guiding Questions

The following questions will guide the probing of the Participants.

1. Could you tell me about the first time that you were exposed to violence?
2. When was the first time that violence occurred in the relationship?
3. Tell me about the first time that you thought that the violence in the relationship had to end?
4. When was the last time that you remember violence in the relationship?
5. What did you do to stop the violence?
6. Did anyone help you?
7. What would you like another couple to know that would help them stay away from violence?

Appendix R: Human Research Ethics Board Approval Certificate



Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics
Human Research Ethics Board
Approval

is hereby granted to:

Cindy Jardine, Principal Investigator for

04-44 Healing from intimate partner battering in a northern aborigina context: a cast study.

for a term of one year, provided there is no change in experimental procedures. Any changes in experimental procedures must be submitted in writing to the HREB.

Granted: January 13, 2005

Naomi Krogman, Chair, AFHE REB